

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:		13/08/2012	
		N/A / attached		Consultation Expiry Date:		26/072012	
Officer				Application Number(s)			
Craig Raybould				2012/3116/P			
Application Address				Drawing Numbers			
21-23 Earlham Street London WC2H 9LL				Refer to decision notice.			
PO 3/4		Area Team Signature		C&UD		Authorised Officer Signature	
Proposal(s)							
External alterations to the ground floor shop frontage including the enlargement of windows along Earlham Street, enlargement of existing entrance, installation of new glazed doors, replacement of door shutters and replacement of existing glazed brick tiles with a rendered finish (Class A1).							
Recommendation(s):		Refuse planning permission					
Application Type:		Full Planning Permission					
Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:		Refer to Decision Notice					
Informatives:							
Consultations							
Adjoining Occupiers:		No. notified	44	No. of responses	01	No. of objections	00
				No. electronic	00		
Summary of consultation responses:		<u>42 Earlham Street</u> The occupiers of the property have no objection to the proposals.					
CAAC/Local groups* comments: *Please Specify		Covent Garden CAAC were consulted on 27/06/2012. The CAAC replied having no comment.					

Site Description

The application site occupies the ground floor and basement of a four storey mixed use block located on the corner of Earlham Street and Mercer Street fronting the Seven Dials junction in Covent Garden.

The building consists of a retail shop (A1) occupied by the 'Firetrap' store at present, with residential flats (C3) above. At ground floor level, the existing shopfront consists of large glazing panels used for window displays and a glazed entrance on the corner of Earlham Street and Mercer Street. The shopfront surrounds are faced in a dark black/brown coloured terracotta glazed brickwork. Upper floors are faced in red brick.

The site is located within the Earlham Street sub-area of the Seven Dials Estate Conservation Area. The building is not listed and is not identified as a positive contributor to the special character of the CA.

Relevant History

2003/0375/P (27/05/2003) Planning permission was granted for external alteration, including new opening within Mercer Street elevation of shop unit, 23 Earlham Street.

2004/0991/A (03/03/2004) Express Advertisement Consent was refused for the display of internally illuminated hoarding.

2004/1278/P (25/06/2004) Planning permission was refused for the installation of new shopfront to Earlham and Mercer street elevations and a security shutter.

2004/1290/A (25/06/2004) Express advertisement consent was refused for the display of internally illuminated projecting sign.

2004/2642/P (14/07/2004) Planning permission was granted for the installation of 3 no. air condenser units and acoustic housing to rear of building for existing retail unit.

2004/4106/P (21/12/2004) Planning permission was granted for the retention of new glazed shopfront, entrance ramp and translucent roller shutters to Earlham and Mercer Street elevations.

2004/4108/P (21/12/2004) Planning permission was granted for the retention of translucent roller shutter.

2004/4110/P (21/12/2004) Planning permission was granted for the retention of glazed shopfront.

2005/2127/A (26/09/2005) Express advertisement consent was granted for the continued display of internally illuminated (letters only) projecting sign located at fascia level on the Earlham Street frontage.

Relevant policies

LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies

LDF Core Strategy

CS5 (Managing the impact of growth and development)

CS14 (Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage)

Development Policies

DP24 (Securing high quality design)

DP25 (Conserving Camden's heritage)

DP30 (Shopfronts)

Seven Dials Estate Conservation Area Statement (1998).

Camden Planning Guidance 2011

CPG1 (Design) 2011 (paras 1.1-2.12, 7.10-7.12, 7.25-7.34)

Assessment

Proposals

The application proposes alterations to the shopfront of the ground floor retail unit. These consist of the widening of both glazed areas on the Earlham Street elevation by approximately 0.5m and the increase in height of the glazing on the Earlham Street elevation and the front entrance by approximately 0.5 so that they rise to the full height of the shopfront and the installation of new glazed doors to the front entrance.

The existing glazed brick tiles covering the face of the shopfront are proposed to be replaced with a rendered finish.

An external open-lattice style brick-bond roller shutter is proposed to be affixed over the front entrance door.

Analysis

The building is a latter addition to this part of CA and does not positively contribute to the character of the CA. Nonetheless its mass and proportions have been designed to accommodate a relatively small retail unit, the presence of which typifies the boutique commercial nature of this part of Covent Garden.

The proposed widening of the larger glazed section of the shopfront on the Earlham Street elevation will create a large single expanse of shopfront glazing. This gives the impression of a larger retail unit and departs from the character of the area which is typified by small shopfronts and window displays giving a traditional and boutique feel to the area.

Whilst it is recognised that there are full height glazed shopfronts on the Mercer Street elevation and on the neighbouring property on Earlham Street, these are much smaller in width and therefore have a less damaging visual affect on the character of the area.

The incremental enlargement of the glazed shopfront as proposed in this application is considered to contribute to the piecemeal erosion of the character of the CA. This is contrary to the detailed guidance set out in CPG1 (paras 7.10-7.12) and to the Seven Dials Conservation Area Statement. It is also fails to meet policies CS13, DP24, DP25 and DP30 of the LDF.

The existing glazed brick tiles on the shopfront surrounds, while attractive in themselves are not worthy of retention. The proposed rendered finish is appropriate within the context of neighbouring properties and the Seven Dials Conservation Area.

The application proposes an external open-lattice style roller-shutter over the front entrance. A similar roller-shutter was approved in 2004 (our ref: 2004/4110/P). Whilst an internal roller shutter would have been preferable, the applicant has advised that this is not possible due to the internal arrangement of the shop. Notwithstanding this, the proposed roller-shutter is of a collapsible, folding, open-lattice, brick-bond design that will allow views into and light out of shop thereby maintaining an active frontage. This is in general accordance with the guidance set out in CPG1 and meets with policy DP30.

Conclusion

The enlargement of the glazed windows on the Earlham Street elevation creates an unduly large and obtrusive glazed area that negatively affects the proportions of the shopfront and fails to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Seven Dials Estate CA. This is contrary to policies CS13, DP24, DP25 and DP30.

Recommendation

Refuse planning permission.