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London Borough of Camden
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3RD FLOOR, 39 EARLHAM STREET, WC2H 9LT

LISTED BUILDING CONSENT APPLICATION FOR INTERNAL ALTERATIONS IN ASSOCIATION WITH REFURBISHMENT OF THE THIRD FLOOR

Planning Portal reference: PP-12823325

This application has been prepared by Rolfe Judd Planning ('the Agent') on behalf of Liquid Violet ('the Applicant') to accompany an application for Listed Building Consent to the London Borough of Camden ('LBC') relating to internal alterations associated with the refurbishment of the 3rd floor, at the address 39 Earlham Street, London, WC2H 9LT ('the Application Site' or 'the Site').

For the purpose of the Application, the description of development is as follows:

'Internal alterations and refurbishment of the third floor.'

This Planning & Heritage Statement should be read in conjunction with the following additional documents which accompany the application:

- / Application Forms;
- / Community Infrastructure Levy Form;
- / Existing Floor Plan (drawing no. 02) – prepared by White Mark Limited
- / Proposed Floor Plan (drawing no. 03) – prepared by White Mark Limited.
- / Photographic Schedule – prepared by Rolfe Judd Planning

Site Description & Location

The application site is an existing Grade II Listed building located within the Thomas Neal Centre, a commercial shopping centre positioned within the Seven Dials area of Covent Garden. The site lies within the

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authoritative bounds of the London Borough of Camden, consisting of the 3rd floor level across 29-39 Earlham Street. The 3rd floor is a singular interconnected area, associated with 39 Earlham Street only, whilst the remaining lower levels of the building are associated with Unit 2 and Unit 3 of the Thomas Neal Centre, encompassing 29-39 Earlham Street.



The application site consists of four storeys in Class E use; commercial uses are located at ground and first floor levels while the remaining building consists of office spaces. The entrance used to access the third floor, to which this application relates, is located on the southern façade of the building facing onto Earlham Street.

The surrounding area is categorised by a variety of residential and commercial uses, including Seven Dials market to the east, located less than 20m away from the application site. Earlham Street, a cobbled pedestrian and cycle only street leading towards the historical Seven Dials scenic point, consists of a variety of eateries and commercial businesses pertaining to the southern side of the Thomas Neal Centre to its north, and lined by residential and commercial premises opposite, to the south.

To the east lies Oldham's Walk, a residential courtyard inclusive of commercial shops at ground level; to the south a similar urban form prevails, with further commercial and residential spaces, as well as the discernible 13-storey Orion House business centre approximately 80m southwest of the site. To the north lies the northern façade of the Tomas Neal centre, further beyond which lies Shorts Gardens; a street of a similar nature to the surrounding locale, additionally leading towards Seven Dials scenic point.

Covent Garden, the most proximal underground station to the site, lies approximately 200m southeast. The area has a highly accessible PTAL rating of 6b.

In addition to the above, the application site pertains to the following environmental considerations:

- / Flood Zone 1
- / Central London area (Local Plan Centres)

/ Town Centre Secondary Frontage

/ Archaeological Priority Area

Relevant Planning History

Relevant planning history for the application site has been accessed via the Camden Council planning application search. Please note this refers to 39 Earlham Street in its entirety, inclusive of ground to upper floor levels and external alterations associated with the site.

APPLICATION REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION TYPE	DECISION	DECISION DATE
P14/55/A/27533	39 Earlham Street, London, WC2, for the erection of a part single and part two-storey rear extension for use as a lighting showroom with ancillary facilities, in connection with the workshop/office use on the ground and first floors.	Historic Planning Application	Granted	25/04/1979
9301260 & 9370203	Reinstatement of original entrance via insertion of doors into an existing window opening and construction of stone steps as shown on drawing numbers CB 33/2 and CB 33/7.	Full Planning Permission	Granted	17/03/1994
LSX0304258	Internal alterations and refurbishment at ground to third floor levels.	Listed Building Consent	Granted	28/05/2003
2008/5384/L	Creation of internal openings at ground and first floor levels together with the installation of a roller shutter.	Listed Building Consent	Granted	23/12/2008
2008/5380/P	Use of the first floor level for alternative use as either office (Class B1) retail (Class A1) or showroom (sui generis) in connection with the ground floor retail use (Class A1).	Full Planning Permission	Granted	23/12/2008
2024/0073/P & 2024/0194/L	Replacement of external fixings; installation of new lettering to existing fascia and installation of external lighting.	Full Planning Permission & Listed Building Consent	Granted	21/02/2024

Listed building consent (ref. LSX0304258) approved the refurbishment of the existing offices. The approved plans demonstrate the complete modern refurbishment of the existing office, with new modern plasterboards, suspended ceilings, air conditioning and modern partitions. As demonstrated in the submitted photo schedule, there is no original or fabric of architectural interest, and it is understood the western portion of the third floor comprises a modern extension. Some modern fabric, including glass partition walls have been removed as part of the strip-out works for the new tenant.

As the site has previously been subject to internal and external alterations in support of its ongoing commercial use, it is considered that the proposals contained herein are of a minor nature, similarly supporting the ongoing use of the site for future end-users and enhancing its commercial setting.

Description of Proposal

The proposals include non-structural, non-permanent internal alterations associated with refurbishment of the 3rd floor level to accommodate a new commercial tenant, Liquid Violet. The refurbishment will enable the use of the site as a recording studio for post-production work, voice recording and casting for the entertainment industry, with administration functions. As the site has a lawful Class E use, there is no planning permission required for a change of use from traditional offices to a recording/post-production studio (Class E(g)(iii)).

It is emphasised that the proposed internal works are to ensure the suitability of the host building for the proposed end user, however such alterations are not deemed to be permanent and will not alter any historic fabric. The proposed works require the formation of “floating” sound-proof rooms within the existing space to accommodate the recording studio use. All new elements will be carefully mounted to the existing fabric and do not require any structural interventions or mechanical fixings.

There are no proposed external alterations requiring planning permission; the works are internal only, and do not include demolition.

Partitions

Modern partitions will be installed in order to create the studio spaces. These will not be permanent fixtures and can be removed in future. The partitions will be attached to stud walls, and do not propose to physically alter the original fabric of the building.

The fixed primary partitions, constructed of metal stud, will be double boarded on each side with acoustic plasterboard, with mineral wool infill, constructed between the existing concrete floor slab and the existing soffit slab, against the existing dry-lined walls.

Doors

A new Lobbied Fire Escape Door is proposed, re-positioned to allow for efficient use of the space and to clearly define a safe egress route.

Floors

In areas not to be occupied by studios, the existing modern poor condition floor boarding is proposed to be replaced with a high quality engineered wood flooring, set on the existing supporting timbers. Cableways will be routed in the support zone between the structural slab and the new boarding.

Floors serving the studios will be set out on a high anti vibration mounting system and will be installed with a soft joint at the junction with the new boarding to protect the two elements.

Windows

In the proposed Booths 3 & 4, windows that are not to be used will have insulated boarding set into the existing reveals to provide the required acoustic isolation. In these areas, a film will be applied internally to the existing windows which will be obscured/frosted, which similarly can be removed following the cessation of use.

The western side of the 3rd floor (denoted in blue outline) and associated modern windows, as well as rooftop plant, appear as an extension to the original building fabric across 29-39 Earlham Street, deviating from the original historic window design visible on the eastern side of the third floor (denoted in red outline).

The application associated with this extension has not been located on the Camden Council planning application search, however the following extract from application(s) 2024/0073/P & 2024/0194/L note this has been a feature since before 1993. The blue line boundary denotes the modernised extension, whilst the redline outlines the windows pertaining to no. 39 Earlham Street which retain a more historic appearance.



Noise Insulation

There will be a secondary glazing formed using acoustic laminated glass set into the acoustic isolation shells proposed. The window linings will provide protection between the acoustic shell and the existing mullions, with a resilient seal set against the mullion, with no mechanical fixing to the mullion proposed.

The proposals account for Secondary Floating Acoustic Shells, constructed from timber studs and joists with one layer of plywood and three layers of acoustic plasterboard to the inner face only. The stud and joist zones are to be infilled with mineral wool. This construction is to be firmed on a laminated plywood and cement board raft, set on rubber acoustic isolation mounts laid on the existing structural floor.

Furthermore, inner Acoustic Treatments are proposed. This will be formed of timber framework, infilled with mineral wool and finished with a propriety stretched fabric wall system. Specialist acoustic treatment elements and technical equipment will be mounted in this framework.

Other Alterations / Installations

A new electrical installation will be provided throughout, wired from the existing supply to the floor. New data provision will be installed, utilising the existing building risers to access the floor.

The proposals include the installation of new fire alarm detectors, sounders and beacons, wired into the existing building alarm system. The provision of such is to be approved by the Landlords nominated specialist.

A new heating, ventilation & cooling system will be installed, with new ducted and wall mounted fan-coil units connected to new condensing units housed in the existing dedicated plant room located on the roof level of the host building. Pipework to the new plant will use the existing pie routes, whilst fresh air supply and exhaust will be via the existing ducts.

Access

The proposals pertain to above ground works inclusive of minor internal alterations, such that no changes are

proposed to the existing access arrangements for the building.

Relevant Planning Policies

The proposals have given due consideration to the Local Development Plan for Camden. This consists of the following documents:

- / Camden Local Plan (2017)
- / Policies Map Alterations (2017)
- / Site Allocations Plan (2013)

Heritage Statement

The site lies within the historic Seven Dials Conservation Area. The host building, categorised under 'The Crafts Centre' covering 29-43 Earlham Street and 8-26 Shorts Garden, is Grade II Listed (List Entry Number: 1342094), surrounded by a large concentration of similarly listed buildings. Historic England listed the buildings categorised under The Crafts Centre (previously 'Earlham Street') in 1988, and describes them as follows:

Warehouse, probably originally a brewery; now a crafts centre. Mid C19. Stock brick; roof not visible. 3 storeys. 19 bays to Earlham Street, No.43 with splayed corner and return to Neal Street. Shorts Gardens elevation of 2 storeys. Brick band above ground floor. Segmental headed windows and doorways, those to ground floor on Earlham Street elevation set in segmental headed reveals.

The following buildings located within or adjacent to the Thomas Neal Centre, not categorised under 'The Crafts Centre', are similarly listed and form part of the site's heritage context:

- / 2 Shorts Garden, Grade II Listed (LEN: 1378663)
- / 4 & 6 Shorts Garden, Grade II Listed (LEN: 1378664)
- / 37 Neal Street, Grade II Listed (LEN: 1322097)
- / 35 Neal Street, Grade II Listed (LEN: 1322096)
- / 33 Neal Street, Grade II Listed (LEN: 1322095)
- / 31 Neal Street, Grade II Listed (LEN: 1322094)
- / 29 Neal Street, Grade II Listed (LEN: 1322093)
- / 27 Neal Street, Grade II Listed (LEN: 1322092)

Planning Considerations

Policy A1 of the Local Plan (Managing the impact of development) outlines how the Council will seek to protect the occupiers and neighbours from unacceptable harm to amenity. Factors of consideration include noise and vibration levels; the proposals have suitably applied mitigation measures with regard to noise generation, inclusive of noise insulation measures applied to the internal walls, windows and floorboards of the host building in order to ensure suitable management of noise levels. As such, it is not considered that the development will cause harm to the surrounding environment, which is commercial in use.

Policy D1 (Design) recognises that the Council will seek to secure high quality design in development. This includes the requirement for development to consider the following, of relevance to the proposals:

a. respects local context and character;

b. preserves or enhances the historic environment and heritage assets in accordance with Policy D2 Heritage;

e. Comprises details and materials that are of high quality and complement the local character.

NPPF Paragraph 203 states that the Council should, in determining applications, take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses. In addition, Paragraph 206 states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.

Policy D2 of the Local Plan (Heritage) identifies that development must preserve and, where appropriate, enhance Camden's heritage assets and their settings. It is noted that the Council will not permit the loss or substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, including conservation areas and Listed Buildings. Policy HC1 (Heritage conservation and growth) of the London Plan outlines how development proposals affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance by '*being sympathetic to the assets' significance and appreciation within their surroundings*'.

It is not considered that the internal proposals will impact the host buildings Listed status, nor the outlined designations applicable to the site. It is understood the third floor of the building comprises a modern extension and thus the proposed works will not impact upon the special architectural and historic interest of the building. There will be no loss of a heritage asset, with the proposed alterations deemed non-structural. The proposed alterations will allow the viable use of the 3rd floor as a recording studio, whilst safeguarding the original building fabric through sensitive design measures.

Although the proposals are for internal alterations only, due consideration has been given to the existing historic fabric of the host building. The materials utilised, as previously noted, will not cause detriment to the current fabric and can be safely removed. There are no physical or structural works proposed to the existing materiality, with any alterations and refurbishments consisting of new fabric placed on top of the current fabric, preserving the Listed building through protective layering. A film will be applied internally to windows (where necessary), which will appear as obscured or frosted glazing. Given the location of these windows at the rear of the building and at third floor level, it is not considered this will create any visual impact, nor will it impact on the building's special character. No other design changes are proposed.

To reiterate, there will be no permanent changes, or external changes requiring planning permission, proposed at the site. The internal alterations account for the historic nature of the application site, and will not cause harm or loss to the original fabric of the host building duly in accordance with the above. As noted, a portion of the current modern floorboarding installed during the previous 2003 renovation will require replacement, given its poor condition. This will not impact the original historic fabric of the host building and will ensure the

continued maintenance and safe usage of the building.

Conclusion

This application seeks Listed Building Consent relating to internal alterations associated with refurbishment of the 3rd floor level, at the address 39 Earlham Street, London, WC2H 9LT.

The proposed refurbishment will enable the future end user to adequately use the space as a recording/post-production studio. The proposed replacement of a section of previously refurbished modern floorboarding is deemed necessary as a matter of safety and ongoing maintenance of the host building, however the original historic fabric will not be impacted by such proposed alterations.

In accordance with Local Plan policy, the proposed alterations will preserve the heritage asset and its original setting, and would not cause harm to any special architectural and historic interest of the building. All works are internal and therefore will not impact upon the established character or appearance of the Seven Dials (Covent Garden) Conservation Area.

We trust you will find the submitted information sufficient to validate the application and we look forward to a swift and positive outcome. However, should you require any further details or have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully

Tassia de Paula-Yarmohammadi

For and on behalf of
Rolfe Judd Planning Limited
27 February 2024