

London Borough of Camden
Regeneration and Planning
5 Pancras Square
London
N1C 4AG

For the attention of Ms Miriam Baptist

Dear Miriam,

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (As Amended)
Planning application for shopfront alterations and excavation of existing basement to create a level floor surface at 50-52 Monmouth Street, London WC2H 9EP

Planning Portal Reference: PP-12840486

On behalf of the applicant, Shaftesbury Covent Garden Ltd, we submit an application for planning permission for proposed shopfront alterations and excavation of existing basement to create a level floor surface at 50-52 Monmouth Street, London WC2H 9EP.

The requisite application fee of £293.00 has been paid via the Planning Portal.

The following information is attached in support of this application:

- Application Forms, prepared by Rolfe Judd Planning;
- Site Location Plan, prepared by Child Graddon Lewis;
- Existing and Proposed Plans, prepared by Child Graddon Lewis;
- Design and Access Statement, prepared by Child Graddon Lewis;
- Structural Design Statement, prepared by Furness Partnership;
- Basement Impact Assessment, prepared by Furness Partnership;
- Drainage Strategy and Flood Risk Assessment, prepared by Furness Partnership;
- Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment, prepared by MOLA;
- CIL Forms, prepared by Rolfe Judd Planning.

Site and Surroundings

50-52 Monmouth Street is a four-storey building situated at the corner of Monmouth Street (southern end) and Tower Street. The basement, ground and first floors are in use as a restaurant (Class E) whilst the remaining upper floors are in use as offices (Class E). Access to the offices is via Tower Street, with the restaurant accessed via the corner entrance. Part of the first floor (outside the red line) is also used as offices.

The site is not statutorily listed but is situated within the Seven Dials Conservation Area (SDCA). The wider building is identified as a 'building which makes a positive contribution' to the SDCA.

The surrounding area comprises a mixture of uses, with retail and food and drink premises at ground level and generally offices and residential above. Resultingly, there are a range of shopfront types, which vary in appearance. Other premises in the vicinity have basements.

This planning application relates solely to the ground floor and basement levels of the application property.

OLD CHURCH COURT, CLAYLANDS ROAD, LONDON SW8 1NZ

T 020 7556 1500 / www.rolfe-judd.co.uk

Rolfe Judd Holdings Limited. Registration No.4198298 / Rolfe Judd Architecture Limited. Registration No.1439773 / Rolfe Judd Planning Limited. Registration No.2741774
Registered at the above address

Relevant Planning History

A search of Camden's online planning portal has returned the following applications of relevance:

App Ref.	Description of Development	Decision / Date
2023/4111/P	Variation of conditions 2 (restricted use of basement, ground and first floors to restaurant purposes) and 3 (opening hours) of planning permission ref P9600597 dated 24/03/1997 (for: Alteration and extension, involving infilling of lightwell in connection with proposed dual A1/A3 (shops/food and drink) use at ground floor and basement, dual B1/A3 (business/food and drink) use at first floor and B1 (business) use at second and third floors).	Approved 10/01/2024
2012/5892/P	Installation of feature lighting on external front facade at first floor level of the existing mixed restaurant/office use building (Class A3 and Class B1).	Approved 20/12/2012
2012/2640/A	Display of five externally illuminated fascia signs and a projecting sign to restaurant.	Approved 09/07/2012
2009/1224/A	Display of flag and flag pole on front elevation parapet at roof level.	Appeal Dismissed 12/11/2009
2008/4344/A	Display of non-illuminated projecting sign on existing bracket at first floor level.	Approved 23/12/2008
2007/5475/A	Display of spot-lit fascia signs and 5 no. retractable awnings on the Tower Street and Monmouth Street elevations.	Approved 21/12/2007
PS9805198	The installation of window awnings to ground floor windows facing Monmouth and Tower Streets.	Approved 21/01/1999
PS9804591	The Installation of a clear, polycarbonate entrance canopy.	Approved 07/09/1998
PS9705249R2	External alterations including the installation of a new glazed shopfront.	Approved 17/04/1998
P9600537R1	The infill of an internal lightwell at first, second and third floor levels to provide additional Class B1 floorspace and the raising of the parapet wall at third floor level and alterations to shopfronts.	Approved 09/08/1996

It is clear from the site's planning history, that the ground floor frontage has undergone evolution over time with regard to alterations and advertisements. The existing shopfront is modern, which was replaced following the approval of planning permission PS9705249R2 in 1998.

It is noted that a separate planning application for provision of replacement extract ductwork and new air sourced heat pumps has been submitted in tandem with this application and seeks to support the overall refurbishment of the lower floors for a new restaurant, and the use of the first floors as offices (not subject to planning as no change of use is required) (Planning Portal Ref. PP-12923844).

Proposed Development

Shopfront Alterations

The applicant is proposing to alter the existing modern shopfront on both the Tower Street and Monmouth Street elevations.

The existing stall riser heights will be retained, however the glazing above will be replaced, with new transom lights proposed above the Monmouth Street frontage (to replace existing, obscured transom lights). Louvre

ventilation panels will be inserted at high level underneath the fascia on the Tower Street elevation, replacing existing obscured fanlights positioned behind awnings. The louvres will improve ventilation of the food and drink use at ground and basement level, facilitating the exchange of air in and out of the property, ensuring a continual supply of fresh air.

The existing recessed secondary access door on Monmouth Street is currently accessed via two steps from street level. The internal alterations proposed at ground level will include lowering the floor level in this location to achieve level access from the street with a platform lift providing access to all levels of the restaurant, ensuring accessibility for people of all physical ability. The existing door will be replaced with a new leaf door with glazed panels, and a replacement security gate will be installed, which will roll up into the header above the door ensuring this is not visible during trading hours. A new door is proposed at the main entrance to the site at the apex which will incorporate glazed panels and brass ironmongery to improve visibility into the unit.

The window proportions will remain largely the same, with the exception of Monmouth Street elevation which will be subdivided into three panels with new mullions to accommodate the new internal layout. Single glazing on both elevations will be replaced with double glazing, improving the building's sustainability credentials. It is also proposed to install seven external lights at mid height across the shopfront, which includes two on the Tower Street elevation, two either side of the main corner entrance, and three on the Monmouth Street elevation. There are six existing uplighters located at first floor level (two on the Monmouth Street elevation, two at the apex of the site, and two on the Tower Street elevation).

New signage will be located at fascia level above the shopfront, which will be designed by the incoming tenant to be sympathetic to the existing building and surrounding area. Replacement awnings are proposed on both Tower Street and Monmouth Street elevations, similar to the existing. Figures 1 and 2 below show the shopfronts on each elevation as proposed.

Figure 1 – Proposed corner entrance and Monmouth Street elevation.



Figure 2 – Proposed Tower Street elevation.



Basement Excavation

The applicant is proposing to excavate the existing basement in order to provide a level floor surface and to provide appropriate head height to accommodate dining at basement level. The current arrangement is uneven, with the surface rising in certain parts and dropping in others, making the space difficult to navigate and inefficient. The basement is currently only used for storage and back-of-house uses for this reason.

The Applicant proposes to lower the floor level of the existing basement by between 710-1100mm to create a consistent floor to ceiling height of approximately 3.2m. The vaults will also be lowered by approximately 400-820mm to achieve a maximum head height of circa 2.2m. These works aim to create a more useable space for the restaurant, and will allow the existing vaults to be used for additional restaurant dining for customers to create a unique and special experience. This will significantly improve upon the current arrangement which is very uneven and means the only practical use of the space is for storage and back of house purposes.

The levelling of this floor, in combination with the levelled access at ground level and installation of a platform lift, will ensure the space is useable for people of all physical ability.

Further details regarding the basement works are provided in the accompanying Basement Impact Assessment and Structural Design Statement.

Planning Considerations

Design and Heritage

As the site is located within a conservation area, due consideration has been given to Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which sets out a legal duty for '*special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.*'

Policy D1 of the Camden Local Plan (CLP) concerns design and sets out several criteria that should be met within new development. These include respecting local context and character, preserving or enhancing historic environment, and comprising high quality details and materials.

Policy D2 of the CLP concerns heritage, including provisions specific to development in conservation areas. Sub-section (e) is relevant to this proposal and requires development within CAs to preserve or, where possible, enhance the character or appearance of the area.

Policy D3 of the CLP is specific to shopfronts and sets out Camden's expectation for a high standard of design. Certain criteria are expected to be met, which include their design including details and materials; existing character, architectural and historic merit and design of the building and shopfront; the relationship between the shopfront and upper floors of the building and surrounding properties; general characteristics of shopfronts in the area; community safety and contribution to natural surveillance; and the degree of accessibility.

While the wider building is identified as a positive contributor to the SDCA, the existing shopfront has undergone significant change over time and appears as a more modern example within the area. Indeed, it is not identified as a Shopfront of Merit within Camden's SDCA Statement.

The louvres are proposed solely on Tower Street, which is considered to be more of a 'secondary' elevation, being a narrow one-way street with predominantly inactive frontages. As shown on the elevations, the louvres will replace existing fanlights which comprise obscured glazing, positioned behind awnings. As a result, the layout and scale of the shopfront will be unchanged, with only minor visual changes arising from the installation of the louvres. In order to further minimise their visibility, the louvres will be finished in a colour to match the shopfront.

By improving ventilation to the existing restaurant use, the proposal will improve the customer experience and ensure that the premises remains viable for its current use and can continue to contribute to the vitality of Seven Dials and the surrounding area.

The existing façade will be repaired and repainted to ensure that the shopfront is preserved and elevated, which will continue to adhere to the principle policies of preserving and protecting heritage assets, such as the Seven Dials Conservation Area. The shopfront will retain a high quality design, including new windows which will improve the sustainability credentials for the building, and will continue to contribute to the wider streetscape.

The proposed external lighting will be sensitively designed, with an appropriate level of illumination, to ensure it does not result in any visual harm to the building or amenity of the area. As shown on the proposed elevations, the lights will be evenly spaced across the frontages, to ensure that there is no visual clutter on the frontage.

Basement Impact, Drainage and Flood Risk

Policy A5 of the CLP specifically concerns basement development. The Policy seeks to ensure that such proposals do not cause harm to neighbouring properties; the structural, ground, or water conditions of the area; the character and amenity of the area; the architectural character of the building; and the significance of heritage assets. It also sets out the requirement for a Basement Impact Assessment (BIA), which has been submitted alongside this application.

The Policy also states that the siting, location, scale and design of basements must have minimal impact on, and be subordinate to, the host building and property. Basement development should:

- f) *'not comprise of more than one storey;*
- g) *not be built under an existing basement;*
- h) *not exceed 50% of each garden within the property;*
- i) *be less than 1.5 times the footprint of the host building in area;*
- j) *extend into the garden no further than 50% of the depth of the host building measured from the principal rear elevation;*
- k) *not extend into or underneath the garden further than 50% of the depth of the garden;*
- l) *be set back from neighbouring property boundaries where it extends beyond the footprint of the host building; and*
- m) *avoid the loss of garden space or trees of townscape or amenity value.'*

The proposed basement works will comply with all of the above criteria and essentially comprises of partial excavation to improve the useability of an existing commercial space.

As set out above, a Basement Impact Assessment (BIA) has been undertaken by Furness to assess any potential effects associated with reducing the basement floor level, in terms of the local hydrology, geology and hydrogeology, and potential impacts to neighbours and the wider environment.

The BIA has not indicated any concerns at this stage, with regard to the effects of the proposed basement on the site and surrounding area. However, it does recommend that site investigations and trial holes are undertaken to allow the ground conditions to be confirmed, the depth of the water table to be measured, and the depth and profile of the existing footings confirmed.

A Drainage Strategy and Flood Risk Assessment (DSFRA) has also been prepared. It confirms that the site is within Flood Zone 1 and will involve development that is considered 'less vulnerable' in terms of flood risk. The development also proposes to re-use existing surface water drainage. A new drainage system will be installed

beneath the new basement floor slab, with existing drainage likely to be removed. Subject to further analysis of the drainage strategy, to be undertaken at detailed design stage, the DSFRA raises no concerns.

Archaeology

Policy A5 also requires that applicants demonstrate that basement proposals *'protect important archaeological remains'*. Policy H2, concerning archaeology, then goes on to state that *'the Council will protect remains of archaeological importance by ensuring acceptable measures are taken proportionate to the significance of the heritage asset to preserve them and their setting, including physical preservation, where appropriate.'*

In order to assess whether there are likely to be any archaeological remains, an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (ADBA) has been undertaken and supports the application.

Section 1.2.3 of the ADBA confirms that the site is within Tier 1 Lundenwic Archaeological Priority Area (APA), *'containing the Anglo-Saxon international trading emporium of Lundenwic, which grew along the Thames and Fleet rivers in the seventh to ninth century.'*

The ADBA confirmed that no archaeological investigations have been undertaken at the site previously, but there have been many carried out within a 250m study area around the site. The majority of these investigations have recorded early medieval/Saxon remains, followed by post-medieval deposits. This information contributed to the conclusion that the site has a *'moderate survival potential for archaeological remains dating to Saxon and early post-medieval periods.'*

Taking this into account, the recommendation from the ADBA is for a programme of investigation and recording to be agreed with the LPA's archaeological advisor, and undertaken in accordance with an approved archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI). It is therefore recommended that conditions be included on any approval to this effect.

Summary

This planning application proposes shopfront alterations and excavation of the existing basement to create a level floor surface at 50-52 Monmouth Street.

The external shopfront works have been designed so as to preserve the existing shopfront in terms of layout and scale, introducing louvres to improve the internal environment of the ground floor commercial premises, and external lighting to better illuminate the premises in its prominent gateway location. The levelling of the secondary access to Monmouth Street will improve accessibility into the premises.

The basement excavation will increase the depth of the existing space, creating a level floor surface and consistent floor to ceiling height, and enabling the basement floor to be used for trading. This will provide a better quality and useable space for the premises, which will assist in ensuring its long term viability.

We trust you have sufficient information to determine this application positively; however, should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours faithfully

Barney Ray

For and on behalf of
Rolfe Judd Planning Limited