

Planning Department
London Borough of Camden
2nd Floor, 5 Pancras Square
c/o Town Hall
Judd Street
London
WC1H 9JE

GROUND FLOOR, 56 NEAL STREET, LONDON, WC2H 9PA

FULL PLANNING APPLICATION AND ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT FOR SHOPFRONT ALTERATIONS AND PROPOSED SIGNAGE (PART RETROSPECTIVE)

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Planning Portal reference: PP-12923109

This application has been prepared by Rolfe Judd Planning ('the Agent') on behalf of Shaftesbury Covent Garden Ltd. ('the Applicant') to accompany a retrospective planning application and advertisement consent to the London Borough of Camden ('LBC') for alterations to the shopfront and installation of signage at the address 56 Neal Street, WC2H 9PA.

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

'Alterations to shopfront (retrospective); installation of 1no. externally illuminated fascia panel and 1no. non-illuminated projecting signage'.

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

- / Application Forms;
- / Design and Access Statement – this covering letter;
- / Community Infrastructure Levy Form;
- / Location Plan (drawing no. PL-001-P1) – prepared by Fresson & Tee Architects;
- / Elevation as Pre-Existing (drawing no. PL-100-P2) – prepared by Fresson & Tee Architects;
- / Elevation as Existing (drawing no. PL-200-P2) - prepared by Fresson & Tee Architects;

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

- / Proposed Signage - prepared by Moleskine; and
- / Photo Schedule - prepared by Rolfe Judd Planning.

The requisite fee of £458.00 (excluding VAT) has been paid online via the Planning Portal.

Site Description & Location

The application site is an existing ground floor commercial property, located within the authoritative bounds of the London Borough of Camden.

The application site consists of basement and ground floor in Class E use, whilst the remaining building consists of residential flats (Class C3). The entrance at ground floor, to which this application relates, is located on the western façade of the building facing onto Neal Street.

The surrounding area is categorised by a variety of residential and commercial uses, including Seven Dials market to the west, located approximately 115m from the application site. Neal Street, a cobbled pedestrian and cycle only street forming part of the Metropolitan Walk, abuts Monmouth Street and Short's Gardens, which lead toward the historical Seven Dials scenic point, consisting of a variety of eateries and commercial businesses.

To the east lies Shorts Gardens, with the Covent Garden Medical Centre located approximately 90m to the rear of the site. To the north lies the continuation of Neal Street, behind which lies Endell Street, comprising a variety of commercial units, residential housing and the London Swiss Church. To the south lies the Thomas Neal centre, a Grade II listed retail complex hosting a variety of boutiques, cafes, public houses and warehouse space. To the west lies a further agglomeration of eateries, hotels, cafes, and commercial properties, further beyond which lies Monmouth Street, categorised by a similar commercial and urban pattern.

The host building is not statutory nor locally Listed, however the site lies within the Seven Dials Conservation Area. The closest listed building is 64 Neal Street (Grade II, LEN: 1322100) with a variety of Listed buildings further afield. There are no Listed buildings directly adjacent or opposing the site. It is not thought that the nature of the application, not its location, will impact the surrounding historic fabric.

The site sits in similar distance from both Tottenham Court Road station and Covent Garden station, approximately 250-300m northwest and southeast respectively. 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)

/ CLA Primary Frontage (Local Plan Frontages)

/ Archaeological Priority Area

Relevant Planning History

Relevant planning history for the application site has been accessed via the Camden Council planning application search.

APPLICATION REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION TYPE	DECISION	DECISION DATE
2014/5813/P	Change of use from retail (Class A1) to beauty treatment centre (Sui Generis) at basement and ground floor levels.	Full Planning	Approved	12/11/2014
PS9704305 & CS9704306	The installation of a new shopfront, as shown on drawing numbers 168/PL/01A & 02, and letter dated 9 May 1997.	Full Planning	Approved	16/05/1997

Planning Permission refs. PS9704305 & CS9704306 were approved in 1997 for the installation of a new modern shopfront comprising a full height glazed window, a glazed door in an aluminium frame and painted render surrounds. This shopfront was installed and existed on the site until 2014 when the previous tenant (Browhaus) replaced the shopfront without obtaining planning permission. A Photo Schedule showing a comparison of the different shopfronts is enclosed. This application seeks retrospective consent to revert the shopfront back to a similar design to that approved by the 1997 permission.

The neighbouring host building at 54 Neal Street has undergone a variety of alterations of a similar nature to those proposed herein, inclusive of the '*Replacement of existing glass shopfront with framed glass unit in connection with ground floor retail use*' (application reference 2012/1735/P), allowing for the same extended, glazed doorway currently featured at 56 Neal Street. This has been further detailed in the 'Retrospective Shopfront' section below.

Description of Proposal

The proposals seek retrospective approval of the current (as existing) glazed modern shopfront, as well as proposing a new externally illuminated fascia signage (1no.), non-illuminated projecting signage (1no.) and a rendered painting finish of the façade.

Retrospective Shopfront

The retrospective shopfront alteration encompasses the existing glass shopfront, with a full height glazed door. As set out above, the previous unconsented shopfront was installed by a former tenant (Browhaus) in 2014 and included timber painted mouldings, a timber door and panel above, with decorative detailing specific to the

tenant. In order to accommodate a new tenant, the timber components and decorative elements of the former shopfront were removed, and the shopfront was reverted back to a modern design, similar to the planning permission in 1997 (Application ref: PS9704305 & CS9704306).

It is noted that in the 1997 application, there was a previously sectioned framed glass panel above the glazed door. The new shopfront design no longer encompasses a fixed glazed panel, and instead features a full height door only. This is the only material difference between the current shopfront and the previously approved 1997 shopfront.

The existing shopfront design, as a result of the non-consented changes outlined above, mirrors the adjacent 54 Neal Street shopfront (as shown below) in terms of proportionality, materiality and the use of full height glazing (changes approved under application reference 2012/1735/P). With further examples of a similar nature noted across Neal Street, it is not thought that the changes are inappropriate to the character of the area. The retrospective application is simply seeking approval for a minor change to the 1997 approved shopfront, in the absence of a prior application by the previous tenant.



The extended doorway is thought to create a more cohesive design pattern, enabling a sleek, standard design that does not negatively impact the existing characteristics of the shopfront. Replacement of the previous timber door and fixed panel will allow more light into the store and will increase visibility into the unit, supporting the ongoing operation of the premises and its contribution to the vitality of the wider Seven Dials shopping area. As noted in the planning history for the site, the host building has undergone a number of respective shopfront changes, demonstrating that there are no historic features existing which would need to be retained. The proposals contained herein, inclusive of the retrospective element, are not dissimilar in nature and are therefore not deemed harmful or inappropriate to the host building or surrounding area.

The enclosed Photo Schedule demonstrates the shopfront changes over the past 12 years.

Signage

The proposals include the installation of new externally illuminated fascia signage, projecting signage and façade painting to accommodate the new tenant and their respective brand, further detailed below.

Fascia Sign

The fascia panelling will include the installation of a 186mm x 2,200mm individual lettering sign ('Moleskine'), comprising of a white, 42mm thick logo. 4No. individual lights are proposed above the fascia sign to provide external illumination. The lighting will have a timer-controlled switch, with due consideration given to timing stipulations requested by the Council. Luminance levels will be in similar accordance.

The shopfront façade will be re-painted in RAL 9004, providing a high-quality rendered finish across the entirety of the external design.

A visualisation of the proposed signage and individual external lights is provided below.



Projecting Sign

The projecting sign will measure 447mm x 484mm, with a maximum projection from the host building of 517mm. The sign will not be illuminated.

Projecting signs of a similar nature are noted as a common commercial feature across Neal Street; as such, the proposals are considered appropriate in both size, design and context.

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)

Planning Considerations

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.*

The proposed shopfront alterations comprise of high-quality design and materials, in keeping with the areas array of commercial units, and will not negatively impact the historic environment. The proposals are considered modest, with a neutral colour palette and appropriately scaled lettering, branding and projections of a measured and appropriate nature.

Policy D3 (Shopfront) outlines that the Council will expect a high standard of design in new and altered shopfronts. Of relevance, when determining proposals for shopfront development the Council will consider:

- a. the design of the shopfront or feature, including its details and materials;*
- b. the existing character, architectural and historic merit and design of the building and its shopfront;*
- c. the relationship between the shopfront and the upper floors of the building and surrounding properties, including the relationship between the shopfront and any forecourt or lightwell;*
- d. the general characteristics of shopfronts in the area;*

As noted above, the proposed shopfront will incorporate minor commercial alterations similarly observed across Neal Street. The retrospective element of this application similarly complies; the replacement of the timber door and fixed panel with a full height glazed door is suitable to the surrounding area in terms of design, mirroring the general characteristic of nearby shopfronts (including 54 Neal Street, which, together with the new shopfront, forms a symmetrical design on either side of the residential entrance to the upper parts). The

change is determined to be minor in nature, with no impact upon accessibility, safety or disturbance to remaining existing features.

Policy D4 (Advertisements) notes that the Council will require advertisements to preserve or enhance the character of their setting and host building. Advertisements must respect the form, fabric, design and scale of their setting and host building and be of the highest standard of design, material and detail, whilst the *'size, location, materials, details and illumination of signs must be carefully considered.'*

It is further outlined that advertisements in conservation areas require particularly detailed consideration given the sensitivity and historic nature of these areas. Any advertisements in a conservation area must not harm their character and appearance and must not obscure or damage specific architectural features of buildings.

The proposals, as in line with parts (c) - (g) of this policy, will not contribute to unsightly proliferation of signage in the area, cause light pollution to nearby residential properties or wildlife habitats, nor include flashing illuminated elements or other features thought to impact upon public safety. The proposed illumination and signage are completely in keeping with the surrounding area, preserving the characteristic commercial nature of the Seven Dials Conservation Area, and will not impact upon any significant architectural features or buildings. As outlined above, the Applicant will be happy to agree to limited hours of lighting and luminance levels, as the Council see fit.

The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 require consideration of residential amenity and public safety, taking into account the safety of persons using the highway, whether the advertisement is likely to obscure or hinder the interpretation of any traffic or road sign, or the operation of any device used for the purpose of security or surveillance or for measuring the speed of any vehicle.

The lighting design will point downwards to illuminate the proposed signage for legibility and wayfinding purposes and ensures that there will be no impact on residential amenity of the flats above. Similarly, the signage is over a shopfront, which is well-removed from the public highway, and will not create any distraction or confusion to road users.

It is therefore considered that the proposed signage and façade alterations are compatible with the host building and surrounding environment.

Conclusion

This application seeks planning permission and advertisement consent relating to the installation of 1no. externally illuminated fascia signage, 1no. non-illuminated projecting signage and retrospective shopfront alterations.

The proposed alterations are considered minor and sensitive to the surrounding Sevel Dials Conservation area, with appropriate design, materiality and scaling considered as part of the proposals.

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
20th May 2024