

I am writing on behalf of The Seven Dials Trust in respect of the above-referenced application for listed building consent. The Trust works in partnership with local authorities, landowners, national agencies and local amenity groups to protect the historic fabric of Seven Dials and to promote and bring about exemplary environmental improvements in the area.

The “Seven Dials Renaissance Study” is the key document in the work of the Trust. It provides a detailed framework for the care and enhancement of the total environment of the Seven Dials area. The first study was published in 1990 covering the Seven Dials area in parts of Camden. The latest revised and updated web-edition from 2023 has been extended across the borough boundary down to Long Acre in Westminster, covers an enlarged area in Camden and has been renamed “The Seven Dials in Covent Garden Study” (<https://sevendialscoventgarden.study>).

We are writing to request that the applicant provide additional information in support of the proposed changes to the Crown at 43 Monmouth Street as the applicant’s documents do not provide sufficient detail to determine whether certain of the proposed changes would be detrimental to the listed building and the wider Seven Dials Conservation Area.

As the applicant’s Design, Access and Heritage Statement states, “The Crown is a historic public house located at the heart of Seven Dials, a vibrant and historically significant area within Camden. The building, dating from the 18th century, is Grade II listed and sits within the Seven Dials Conservation Area. It occupies a prominent corner plot on Monmouth Street, contributing to the unique charm and historical character of the area.” That Statement also states that the proposals include the “Replacement of all external light fittings to ensure uniformity and functionality, including the reinstatement of a high-level cannon light”. The proposed plans submitted with the application state the external works include “Overhaul all external lights & ensure all flood lights are the same throughout” and “Install new lamps to lanterns” but provides no further details, photographs or drawings of any replacements for or changes to the existing light fittings.

The Seven Dials in Covent Garden Study states that The Crown is “A property of both special architectural and historic interest and particular townscape value, contributing positively to the character, appearance and significance of the Seven Dials Conservation Area”. The study also notes, however, that “The appearance of the street elevations at first floor level are spoilt by the fixing of a series of large floodlights on the bases of the pilasters and the street elevations at ground floor level are spoilt by the fixing of small ‘Windsor’ lanterns and supporting brackets on the faience pilasters”. It also states that “Consideration should be given to the removal of the existing large floodlights on the bases of the pilasters and the substitution with more discreet floodlighting of the upper storeys of each street elevation and to revealing and appropriate external lighting of the faience fascias.” We hope that the applicant will take these recommendations into account in its plans for the replacement of the external light fittings.

We kindly request that the applicant provide details of all replacement lighting as part of the application and that the Council not approve the application until such details have been submitted and that the Trust and any other interested parties have had the opportunity to review those details with a view towards ensuring that they are appropriate for an important listed building in a prominent location in the conservation area.

These comments are being submitted by email as the Council’s online portal is not accepting comments for this application as the end date for comments is stated to be before the date of registration of the application.

The Seven Dials Trust