

The Heritage Practice

10 Bloomsbury Way, London WC1A 2SL
+44 (0)20 3871 2951
www.theheritagepractice.com
info@theheritagepractice.com

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

09 January 2024

Planning portal
Reference: PP-13684229

Dear Sir/Madam

Holiday Inn Bloomsbury, Coram Street, London, WC1N 1HT

We write on behalf of the owners of the above property (hereafter referred to as "the applicant") to submit a Planning application to the London Borough of Camden. This application is submitted for minor alterations to the Coram Street façade of the Holiday Inn Bloomsbury, Coram Street, London, WC1N 1HT (hereby referred to as the 'the site').

The Site

The site comprises a hotel (class C1) located on the south side of Coram Street, at the junction with Marchmont Street. The building comprises a modern seven storey building finished in brick with horizontal glazing to the upper floors. The façade is separated from Coram Street by an entrance way (existing bar seating area) and a wide sunken garden area.

The Site is not listed or Locally listed and is outside of a conservation area.

The Proposal

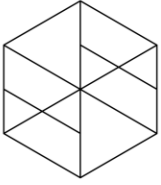
These proposals form part of a wider renovation to the site which includes the hotel reception, the guestrooms and the restaurant. The proposal relate to minor works to part of the ground floor façade adjacent to the main entrance on Coram Street (outlined in red below) which is used as a bar in association with the hotel.

The works include:

- Replacing the existing windows with bi-folding glazed doors, Crittall metal frame style with powder coated finish, RAL 9005 "black".
- A new balustrade would be installed to the front of the bi-fold doors with timber handrail with powder coated metal rails and posts.
- The main entrance doors would be brought forward to align with the frontage.
- The existing dated planters will be replaced with granite planting beds.
- The existing timber cladding will be replaced with aluminium wall cladding panels, and the colour will be RAL 9005 "black".
- The existing tiling/paving to the frontage would be replaced with decorative tiles. Design and materials tbc.

Access:

- There would be no change to existing levels.
- Access will be improved by means of wheelchair-compliant entrance doors. The existing doors have no lower vision panels. The proposed entrance doors will contain vision panels for compliant wheelchair access.



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Impact

The main impact of the works would be on the character and appearance of the building and area.

Of most relevance in the consideration of the proposed design is section 6 'shopfronts' of the 2021 Camden Design Guidance.

The guidance 'strongly discourages' recesses in shopfronts due to their potential for attracting anti-social behaviour. The proposed scheme seeks to remove the existing recess. This would result in a public benefit from the scheme.

Colour and materials

The guidance states that 'contemporary materials such as colour-coated steel, aluminium and bronze instead of timber may be appropriate depending on the building and its location'

In this instance the 'bar' frontage forms part of a much larger building which is modern in its appearance and character. The individual bays subject to this application can easily accommodate a minor change to the cladding of the columns whilst remaining deferential to the building as a whole.

Indeed the existing 'pub' design has faux timber columns, panelled doors and etched glazing, which are at odds polished stone entrance facade and general design and appearance of the host building.

The use of black window frames and cladding columns would better relate to the colour of the curtain walling on the façades above, as well as the metal guard around the sunken garden area in frontage. The metal finish of the proposed cladding to the columns would respond to polished stone cladding around the main hotel entrance. The copper inlay strips would respond to the horizontal nature of the main building and tone of the brickwork.

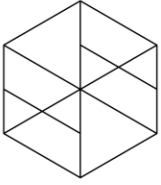
Folding shopfront windows

The guidance states that 'folding shopfronts are not generally considered acceptable, particularly on historic buildings such as listed buildings and those in Conservation Areas.'

Folding shopfronts are not generally considered acceptable because they create a visual 'void' to a frontage and can increase noise and disturbance to the occupiers of neighbouring properties. This would not be the case in this instance. The raised planters and guard railing would prevent direct access to the bi-fold doors and therefore allow the control/containment of to be managed in the same way as existing. This is unlikely to create additional uncontrolled disturbance for neighbours, in addition to the existing external seating area to the frontage of the building.

Visually, the raised planters and guard railing would also prevent the creation of a visual 'void' when open. When closed the use of fine crittal style framed allows the doors appear as mutipaned windows to match the new adjoining windows/door units.

Unlike typical shopfronts the proposed bay bi-fold doors would represent only 10% of the total ground floor frontage on Coram Street.



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The proposed material and design has been chosen to complement and harmonise with the existing materials. Overall the proposed design is considered to respect the detailed design, materials, colour and architectural features of the shopfront and building itself.

Heritage

The site is not in a conservation area but is surrounded by the Bloomsbury conservation area. Given the limited extent of works there there will be no impact on the setting of the neighbouring listed buildings, or on the setting of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area.



View of the hotel from Marchmont Street. The proposed alterations affect the area outlined red only.

We trust that the submission provides you with all the necessary information to validate this application. Should you have any queries in the meantime, please contact info@theheritagepractice.com.

Yours faithfully,

The Heritage Practice