



Our Ref: JG/cw/12094
Your Ref: PP-02131533
Email: jgleeson@firstplan.co.uk
Date: 13 August 2012

Planning Services
Camden Council
Town Hall Extension
Argyle Street
London
WC1H 8EQ

Dear Sir,

APPLICATION FOR PLANNING AND ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT AT 1 MONMOUTH STREET, LONDON

We have been instructed to submit planning and advertisement consent applications on behalf of Veg Zone Ltd, at the above address. The application relates to shopfront alterations including the installation of five retractable awnings and advertisements. The application has been submitted via Planning Portal (ref: PP-02131533).

The application comprises:

- Completed application forms and certificate;
- Copy of notice;
- Design and Access Statement within this covering letter;
- Heritage Statement within this covering letter;
- Drawing 12050/100/01: Existing Plans;
- Drawing 12050/100/02: Existing Elevations;
- Drawing 12050/100/03: Existing Site Plan (Block Plan);
- Drawing 12050/100/04: Existing Site Plan;
- Drawing 12050/SK01: Plans
- Drawing 12050/SK02: Elevations
- Drawing 12050/SK03: Sections;
- Drawing 12050/SK04: Signage;
- Drawing 12050/SK05: Awning Details;
- Drawing 12050/SK07: Menu Details;
- Drawing 12050/SK08: Hanging Sign Details.

The requisite planning fee of £265.00 has been paid via Planning Portal.

Application Proposals

The application seeks alterations to the shopfront including the installation of five retractable awnings and advertisements. The details of these elements are listed below:

Advertisements

- 1. no. 1720mm x 365mm 'Just Falafel' fascia sign comprising green glazed tiling at Neal Street elevation. Sign is to be lit via LED uplighter and downlighter which will be routed into plywood, painted to match glazed brick;
- 1. no. 1720mm x 365mm 'Just Falafel' fascia sign comprising green glazed tiling at Monmouth Street elevation. Sign is to be lit via LED uplighter and downlighter which will be routed into plywood, painted to match glazed brick;
- 2. no. 550mm x 310mm x 57mm menuboxes to be positioned either side of the main entrance and to be internally lit;
- 1. no. 405mm x 500mm projecting sign comprising black steel frame hanging from existing mortar wall.

Alterations to Shopfront

- Installation of 2. no retractable green canvas awnings to be located in same position as existing awnings at Neal Street elevation;
- Installation of 3. no retractable green canvas awnings to be located in same position as existing awnings at Monmouth Street elevation;
- Green glazed tiling to shopfront;
- Painted columns to be stripped back to original brick to match original features at first floor level and above;
- Installation of dark stained timber frame and sash windows;
- Dark metal crittal doors with metal kick plate.

Relevant Planning History

There is only a limited amount of planning history available for 1 Monmouth Street and the relevant permissions are listed below.

A certificate of lawfulness application was granted on 21 October 2005 for the 'existing use of the ground floor and basement as a café and hot food takeaway (sui generis)' (ref: 2005/4002/P). The existing 'Neal's Corner Sandwich Shop' operates under this permission.

On 15 October 2010 an application was permitted for the display of one non illuminated hanging sign to the front elevation of the existing building (ref: 2010/4695/A).

Planning Policy

The site falls within the Seven Dials (Covent Garden) Conservation Area and is not listed, although there are a number of listed buildings in the surrounding area. The building is regarded as making a positive contribution to the conservation area.

Core Strategy (Adopted November 2010)

The Council's Core Strategy was adopted in November 2010 as part of the Local Development Framework and largely replaced the Unitary Development Plan.

Policy CS14 on conserving heritage assets states that the Council will require development to be of the highest standard of design and it should respect local context and character. The Council will seek to preserve and enhance Camden's heritage assets.

The shopfront and advertisement scheme has been carefully considered to ensure that it is in keeping with the design of the local context and character. The proposals will improve the appearance of the building and will continue to preserve and enhance the Seven Dials Conservation Area.

Development Policies (Adopted November 2010)

The Development Policies Document was adopted at the same time as the Core Strategy in November 2010 and it sets out the detailed planning criteria used to determine planning applications.

Part of policy DP24 states:

“The Council will require all development, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, to be of the highest standard of design and will expect development to consider:

- a) character, setting, context and the form and scale of neighbouring buildings;**
- b) the character and proportions of the existing building, where alterations and extensions are proposed;**
- c) the quality of materials to be used;**
- d) the provision of visually interesting frontages at street level...”**

As discussed below, the proposals are in keeping with the context, setting, form and scale of surrounding buildings, of which there is a variety of frontage styles and the scheme will use high quality materials which will improve the appearance of the existing shopfront.

Policy DP25 states that the Council will only permit development within conservation areas that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area. Development should accord with the Council's conservation area statements when considering applications that fall within conservation areas.

The proposals will continue to preserve and enhance the character of the conservation area by incorporating a new shopfront, awnings and advertisements which will improve the appearance of the existing building, whilst ensuring that the new shopfront is in keeping with the surrounding area. The proposals will bring significant benefits to the appearance of this part of the Seven Dials Conservation Area. From a design and conservation perspective, the proposals have been sensitively considered and each element will respect the context of the building. This will also ensure that the building will remain adaptable for future users.

Policy DP30 sets out that when considering proposals for shopfront development, the Council will consider:

- “a) the design of the shopfront or feature;**
- 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; and**
- e) community safety and the contribution made by shopfronts to natural surveillance”.**

The design of the shopfront and advertisements has been sensitively considered to ensure that they provide a high quality appearance, which is required for this location. The existing shopfront will be replaced by a more traditional shopfront and this will improve the appearance of the shopfront whilst remaining in keeping with the upper floors and surrounding buildings.

The existing awnings are unattractive and out of proportion with the unit and surrounding buildings. The awnings feature a large amount of text and combined with the large box fascia signs, create a cluttered appearance.

Policy DP26 states that the Council will protect the quality of life of occupiers surrounding development proposals. The supporting text at paragraph 26.4 outlines that lighting from advertisements can cause artificial light pollution to neighbouring residents.

The advertisements are considered to be in keeping with the nature of this commercial area and are a significant improvement on the current large box fascia signs, as shown on drawing 12050/100/02. These existing signs dominate the building and are inappropriate for the building, given its prominent corner position between Neal Street and Monmouth Street.

The proposed advertisement scheme features a projecting sign at the Neal Street elevation and a fascia sign and menubox to both the Neal Street and Monmouth Street elevations. The fascia signs will comprise 'Just Falafel' in green glazed tiles which will be externally lit via LED strip uplighters and downlighters. The illuminated menuboxes are small in scale and will be located either side of the main entrance in a symmetrical fashion. The projecting sign will be located on an existing mortar wall. The advertisements are required in order to alert passers-by to the presence of Just Falafel. The illumination of the signs will be to standard illumination levels and as a result, is considered acceptable for this location.

The proposals will not give rise to any highway safety issues and will not negatively impact on the amenity of surrounding occupiers.

Heritage Statement

The site falls within the Seven Dials Conservation Area which was designated in 1971 and later extended in 1974, 1991 and 1998. The application site is not listed, however is noted within the Seven Dials Conservation Area Statement (CAS) as being a building which makes a positive contribution. It should be noted that the shopfront at the application site is not listed as being of merit and the existing shopfront features large unattractive signage which is out of keeping with the aspirations of the Council for the Seven Dials area.

The application site is on the corner of Monmouth Street and Neal Street at the western end of the Seven Dials Conservation Area.

Monmouth Street and Neal Street both feature many properties which retain the original 17th and 18th century plan form. A number of the properties along Neal Street had new facades constructed in the early 19th century. The narrow width of the buildings along Neal Street give a character and rhythm to the street.

The CAS sets out guidelines for development and states that new development should be seen as an opportunity to enhance the Conservation Area and should respect the built form and historic context of the area, local views, existing features such as building line, roof lines, elevational design and where appropriate, architectural characteristics.

In terms of design, the Conservation Area has a long history of development which is demonstrated in the variety of styles which are juxtaposed within it. Within the last 20 years, there has been the successful combination of refurbishment and modern design, reflecting the dynamic changing character of the area. The CAS goes on to say that appropriate design for the Conservation Area can reflect both the historic and the modern context and both traditional and contemporary materials may be appropriate.

With regard to materials, the CAS states that traditional features should be retained where possible. The CAS further states that the Council will require proposals for new shopfronts and advertisements to preserve and enhance the visual character and appearance of the shopping streets, through respect for the proportions, rhythm and form of the frontages.

The proposals for the shopfront will incorporate high quality materials and a high standard of design, which has been carefully considered to ensure that the character and appearance of the building and conservation area are preserved. The existing shopfront is to be replaced with green glazed tiling. The

secondary access to the unit on the Neal Street elevation is to be removed and all windows will be replaced with more traditional glazed sash windows. The main entrance will be replaced with dark metal crittal style doors, which will match the windows. The proposals will provide a fusion of traditional and contemporary design.

The existing unit already features a number of awnings which are unattractive and out of scale with the building. This application proposes to replace these with retractable green canvas awnings which will complement the proposed shopfront in terms of scale, colour and design. This will modernise the appearance of the shopfront whilst incorporating a more traditional style, and the awnings will be in keeping with surrounding commercial premises within the Seven Dials Conservation Area. This will significantly improve the appearance of the unit, which is important given the prominent corner position of the building.

Shop signage should be considered appropriate for the Conservation Area, respecting the proportions of the shop frontages. The CAS goes on to say that generally, signage should be externally illuminated.

The advertisements have been sensitively considered and are simplistic in design terms so as to be in scale and keeping with the existing building. The scheme avoids excessive advertising and simply features one projecting sign, two fascia signs and two menuboxes set over both the Neal Street and Monmouth Street elevations. The fascia signs are proportionate to the shopfront and will comprise the same glazed tiling as the remainder of the shopfront. The menuboxes are small in scale and will be located at low level, adjacent to main entrance. The projecting sign is not illuminated and will be comprised of a black steel frame. The overall signage scheme is uncluttered and be in keeping with signage schemes at surrounding premises

Design and Access Statement

Use

This application seeks permission for alterations to the shopfront, installation of retractable awnings and advertisements. The use of the unit will be unchanged and will remain as a café/ hot food takeaway operation.

Amount and Scale

The proposals seek alterations to the shopfront in order to improve the appearance of the unit and facilitate the occupation of Just Falafel. The scheme is in keeping with the scale of the existing and surrounding buildings.

The five awnings proposed within this application will replace the existings awnings at the Neal Street and Monmouth Street elevations and will therefore be in keeping with the scale of the building. The existing awnings are bulky and out of scale and proportion with the building. The proposed awnings will modernise the appearance of the shopfront whilst retaining the character of the area.

Only five advertisements are sought as part of this application, which are simple in design terms and will be subordinate to the building. The advertisement scheme will be a vast improvement on the current signage, which is out of scale with the building and dominates the shopfront. The existing signage is much larger than advertisements at the surrounding buildings.

Layout and Appearance

The shopfront alterations will not impact on the layout of the building and will significantly improve the appearance of the building, bringing it back into a more traditional style that is in keeping with the appearance of surrounding units.

The proposed advertisements will be simple in design terms and will assist in alerting customers to the presence of the business, whilst respecting the character of the area.

Landscaping

There is no landscaping proposed at the unit.

Access

The existing secondary access located at the Neal Street elevation is to be replaced with a window and this will provide uniformity with surrounding shopfronts. The location of the main entrance will remain as existing but will feature a new door.

Conclusions

This application seeks permission for alterations to the shopfront and the installation of advertisements at 1 Monmouth Street. The premises already has consent for café/ hot food takeaway use and therefore the principle of Just Falafel's occupation is not considered an issue. The proposals will simply upgrade the appearance of the building.

The two main planning issues to be considered are the impact on amenity and the design and impact on the conservation area. As discussed above, The proposals to the shopfront will significantly improve the appearance of the existing building and will add an attractive addition to this part of the Conservation Area, which will be in keeping with the diverse shopfronts along Neal Street and Monmouth Street.

In addition, the proposals will not have any significant impact on the amenity of surrounding occupiers.

Overall it is considered that the proposals are appropriate for this location and will preserve and enhance the existing building and the character of the area and are in line with the Council's planning policy and guidance.

I trust that the information enclosed is sufficient and I look forward to hearing from you once this application has been registered.

Yours faithfully,



JANE GLEESON
Director

Enc.