

# CBRE

CB RICHARD ELLIS

CB Richard Ellis Limited  
Kingsley House  
Wimpole Street  
London W1G 0RE

Switchboard +44 (0)20 7182 2000  
Fax +44 (0)20 7182 2001  
Fax No 020 7182 2021  
Direct Line 020 7182 2389  
john.mcnally@cbre.com

Our Ref  
Your Ref

Tom Webster  
London Borough of Camden  
Town Hall  
Argyle Street  
London  
WC1H 8ND

23 MAY 2007

21 May 2007

Dear Tom

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990  
8 MONMOUTH STREET, LONDON, WC2H 9HB

On behalf of Firmdale Hotels plc, I enclose a planning application for a change of use at 8 Monmouth Street.

In support of the application we submit the following:

- 3 copies of the completed planning application form and completed certificate B
- 3 copies of the site location plan;
- 3 copies of the existing plan – drawing no. 1105/151; and
- 3 copies of the proposed plan – drawing no. 1105/152; and

This application is a resubmission of the application that was withdrawn on 22 August 2006 (application reference 2006/2926/P), and therefore no planning application fee is required.

## Background

The existing retail unit began life as part of the original hotel on this site, The French Hospital. However, as a retail unit it has had a very chequered and unsuccessful history of short term tenants, with frequent periods of vacancy throughout the past 10 years. It is currently vacant, and has been so for over a year. In addition, the retail unit is of sub-standard quality, having no provision for services within the unit, and no possibility of doing so as the existing hotel is situated above, below, to the rear and at the side of the unit.

## Proposal

The proposal is for the change of use of the ground floor of 8 Monmouth Street from retail (A1) use to hotel (C1), which would then facilitate the extension of the existing restaurant/bar area of the Covent Garden Hotel next door at 10 Monmouth Street. There will be no need for any additional plant or servicing for this new space as the existing arrangements for the hotel have sufficient capacity.

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The Covent Garden Hotel has a pressing need to extend the restaurant/bar area of the hotel to more comfortably accommodate the numbers of diners and at breakfast and lunch times. The most efficient method of achieving this is to use the existing retail unit at 8 Monmouth Street.

Policy R7-C of the Replacement UDP is relevant as it seeks to protect local shops. As 8 Monmouth Street is not located within a Central London Frontage, Town Centre or Neighbourhood Centre, it seems clear that the designation of this retail unit would be as a local shop. The policy states that planning permission will be granted for a net loss of shopping floorspace provided that, within the Central London Area, the development contributes to local character, function, viability, and amenity. The supporting text the policy also states that the Council will consider granting planning permission for the loss of shops where there is an alternative provision within 5-10 minutes walk, depending on the scale of provision.

The retail unit at 8 Monmouth Street would be used to enhance the quality of service provided by Covent Garden Hotel, which contributes hugely to the character, function and economic activity of this part of Camden and Central London. The hotel currently employs 106 people, and the creation of this additional space will facilitate the creation of 3 additional jobs.

In addition, the site is located a short distance away from, and certainly within 5-10 minutes walk of, the Central London frontages at Charing Cross Road and Tottenham Court Road, and therefore competes with the vast retail offer provided on these frontages, which would clearly explain the current vacancy of the unit and the turnover of occupiers in recent years.

The proposed change of use is therefore in accordance with the criteria set out in Policy R7.

It is also important to note that, in recent months, our client has engaged the local community to discuss this proposal, and specifically has approached the Covent Garden Community Association whom, despite objecting to the original application for this proposal, now fully understand and support the necessity for the additional space. In addition, Councillor Rebecca Hossack has also been consulted, and she too supports the scheme.

I trust this information is useful to you, and I look forward to receiving notification that the application has been registered in due course.

Yours sincerely,



**JOHN McNALLY**  
Senior Planner