

RL/JD/P5782  
30 January 2015

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

Dear Sirs

**Town & Country Planning Act 1990**  
**Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990**  
**29 Neal Street, London, WC2H**  
**Planning and listed building application for the relocation of existing internal stairs; removal of existing mezzanine floor and minor internal walls at basement level with associated internal refurbishment works; and replacement of existing shop front.**

**Planning Portal Reference: PP-03938513**

On behalf of our client and the applicant, Shaftesbury Covent Garden Limited, we submit a full planning and listed building application for internal listed building works and the provision of a new shop front. We enclose with this letter a cheque for the requisite planning fee of £195.00. Electronic copies of all necessary documents have been submitted online via the Planning Portal.

*Site Location and Description*

The property, 29 Neal Street is located within the shopping district of Seven Dials along the western elevation of Neal Street and forms part of the larger warehouse building; Thomas Neal's Centre. The property comprises a basement, ground and three upper floors. The basement and ground floor are occupied as retail Class A1, with the first, second and third occupied as residential accommodation, Class C3.

The property is located within Seven Dial's Conservation Area and is statutorily Grade II Listed. English Heritage notes the following historical and architectural description for 29 Neal Street:

*"Terraced house and shop. Probably early C18, restored early C19. Multi-coloured stock brick. 4 storeys and basement. 2 windows. C20 Shop front. Gauged red brick flat arches to recessed sash windows with early C19 glazing bars. Continuous 3rd floor workshop window with segmental arch. Restored parapet. INTERIOR: not inspected."*

We note that this application relates to the basement and ground floor only, and does not include any

**Architecture Planning Interiors**

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works to the upper floors.

### Planning History

The application property, specifically the shop front, has undergone considerable changes within recent decades.

In 1972, a bold and innovative shop front was designed and installed by the renowned architect and designer Max Clendinning. The shop front was unfortunately removed by later tenants and replaced with an inappropriate aluminium framed unit. The tenants submitted (subsequent to enforcement action) a retrospective planning application for its retention which was refused in November 1991 (ref. 9100872).

On 10<sup>th</sup> December 1992, an application for planning and listed building consent was approved for the removal of the unlawful aluminium shop front and replacement with a new traditional hardwood timber unit (ref. 9201166). As understood, this remains to be the shop front as existing to date.

Although not directly relevant to this application, further listed building and planning consents have been granted for alterations to the buildings upper residential floors.

We also confirm for the Council's clarity that advertisement and listed building consent was granted on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2011 for a new non-illuminated hanging sign and is shown on the application's proposed drawings.

### The Proposal

The applicant seeks the careful refurbishment of the existing retail unit at basement and ground floor. As evident within the properties planning history, there have been a number of alterations to the buildings appearance, both externally and internally which we consider to detract from the historic qualities of the Grade II Listed building.

This application therefore proposes a number of minor alterations which will preserve and enhance the aesthetic qualities of the historic building and its future setting along Neal Street. A summary of the proposed works include the following:

Planning and listed building consent for proposed external works;

- New traditional timber shop front with extended glazing panel; removal of existing 'stick-on' glazing bars; replacement of roller shutter boxing and bulky fascia sign with traditional lead flashing and 'toothed' detailed cornicing; newly glazed entrance door and traditional glazed fanlight with unit number detail.
- Relocation of existing alarm box.

Listed building consent for proposed internal works;

- Removal and infill of non-original mezzanine floor located at ground floor to provide traditional open planned and level retail floor space.
- Relocation and infill of non-original ground to basement staircase from the rear of shop to its traditional positioning under existing ground to first floor staircase.
- Removal of minor non-load bearing walls located at basement level to provide open floor space suitable for future retail occupation.

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We confirm that all works will be carefully and sensitively completed to ensure the preservation of the historic building. Prior to submitting the application, a Historic Schedule was completed by surveyors Fresson & Tees to confirm that the works proposed would not impact upon any part of the original fabric of the building which may be considered of historic or architectural interest.

For further detailed information, please refer the submitted Historic Schedule, Design & Access Statement, and existing and proposed drawings numbered; 22489-E01; E02; P01; P02; P03

*Planning Policy Consideration*

The Seven Dials Renaissance document published in 1998 by the Seven Dials Trust notes that the historic shop front, including that later installed by designer Max Clendinning, was removed and replaced with an inappropriate aluminium shop front. Subsequent to enforcement action by the Council, a replacement timber shop was then approved and installed in 1992 using traditional timber and design detail.

It is considered that the existing shop front design and proportion does not sit comfortably against the buildings façade. The shop front appears squashed and disproportioned between the glazed windows, entrance door and bulky fascia sign which includes a disused roller shutter. The applicant seeks to maximise the potential of the building with a complete refurbishment and so enhance its aesthetic appearance and re-instate traditional features and design detail, comment across much of Seven Dials.

Development Policy DP30 (Shop fronts) expects a high standard of design in new and altered shop fronts. Design consideration should be given to the relationship between the shopfront and the upper floors of the building and those surrounding properties. The proposed shop front is considered to relate to the original proportions of the building and use of traditional of materials within the Conservation Area. The new glazing will provide an elegant shop front for the future retailers with increased levels of internal daylight and the removal of excess bulk and clutter at fascia level which we consider to detract from the buildings historic qualities.

Development Management Policy DP25 (Conserving Camden's Heritage) seeks to maintain the character of Camden's historic conservation areas and listed buildings; permitting development only which preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area or listed building. The proposal seeks to significantly improve the existing shop front which appears 'compressed' and sits uncomfortably within the surrounding street frontage. The proposed works provides suitable alterations which improve the exiting fascia, glazing, with the addition of a new fanlight, traditional timber features and cornicing detail. The retention and reuse of traditional design features and materials such as timber and lead dressings will ensure the historic character of the building is protected and preserved for the foreseeable future.

The proposed internal alterations to the Grade II Listed Building are considered to be minor and would not compromise the historic qualities or architectural integratory of the building. As noted previously and is demonstrated within the Historical Schedule; very few original features have been preserved across the basement or ground floor. The existing basement to ground stairs is non original and relocating it to its traditional position (under the ground to first floor staircase) would create a more efficient retail floor plan. The existing mezzanine level is also non original and its proposed removal would therefore restore the building to a traditional open plan basement and

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ground floor retail unit.

Summary

The applicant seeks to provide a new traditional timber framed shop front which would sit comfortably within the building's façade and provide significant aesthetic improvements to the existing retail frontage along Neal Street and the listed building. Further improvement works are sought internally to provide a traditional level and open plan retail space, including the relocation of the non-original basement to ground floor stairs, the removal of the non-original mezzanine floor, and the minor removal of existing basement level walls. We consider the proposed works are appropriate and in accordance with local and national policy which supports the refurbishment of protected historic buildings within a conservation area where such works would preserve and enhance their setting.

We trust that the application along with its submitted information is sufficient for the Council to validate the application and we look forward to a swift and positive outcome. However, should you require any further information or would like to arrange a site visit please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours faithfully



Rupert Litherland  
Rolfe Judd Planning Limited