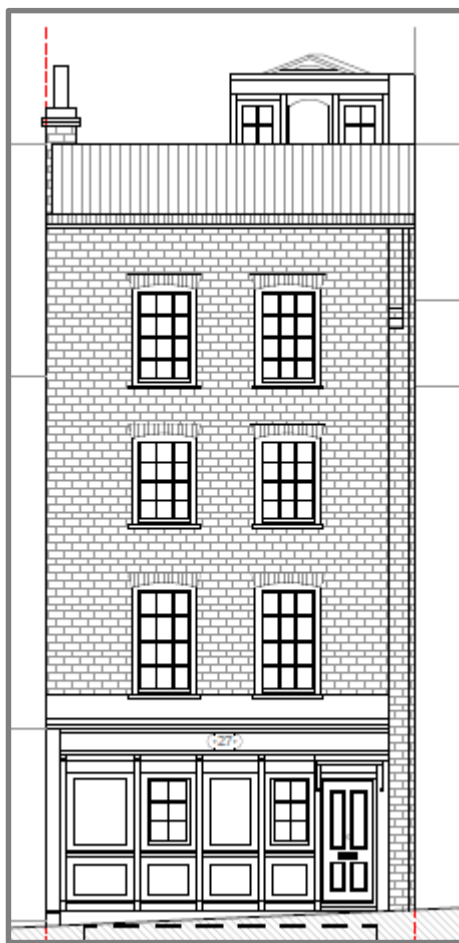


PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT



**Relating to proposed works at 27 Mercer Street, WC2H
9QR**

Prepared by Drawing and Planning Ltd

July 2015

Contents

1. Introduction and Aims	2
2. Site Description.....	2
3. Relevant Planning History	2
4. Proposal.....	3
5. Listing Description.....	4
6. Relevant Planning Policies.....	4
7. Hertitage Impact Assessment.....	6
8. Assessment of scheme against relevant policies.....	6
9. Access and Parking.....	7
10. Conclusion.....	7



1.0 Introduction and Aims

This planning, design and access statement has been submitted on behalf of the applicant, in support of an application for planning permission and listed building consent for internal alterations at ground and basement floor and the erection of a glazed canopy over the rear courtyard. This document should be read in conjunction with the accompanying Heritage Statement produced by Mr Kristian Kaminiski BA (Hons), MA, IHBC, FSA.

This application follows on from the advice received as part of the submission of a pre-application request (ref: 2014/5957/PRE) to Camden Council for internal works and canopy over the rear courtyard.

2.0 Site Description

The subject site is a Grade II Listed, four-storey, mid-terraced residential property built circa late 17th Century located within the Seven Dials Conservation Area of Covent Garden. The site lies on the southwest side of Mercer Street, accessed via the ground floor. The surrounding area consists of residential properties either side with a mixture of commercial uses including theatres, shops, restaurants, bars and cafes and residential flats in a vibrant part of Covent Garden. The site was part of the refurbishment of the Comyn Ching Triangle between 1978 - 85 whereby many of the properties within the vicinity underwent improvement works. The works to the application property included a new shopfront, new internal layout, roof extension to existing roof, replacement windows, alterations to fenestrations and removal of rear projection and boundary walls.

3.0 Relevant Planning History

1. Planning REF 011580/011745

45-71 Monmouth Street, 19-31 Mercer Street and 1-21 Shelton Street, WC1.

Rehabilitation of existing buildings and construction of two new buildings at 45-71 Monmouth Street, 19-31 Mercer Street and 1-21 Shelton Street, WC1 to provide residential, retail, light industrial, office and warehouse uses.

Approved 4 October 1977



2. Planning Ref HB/8570346

27 Mercer Street

The fitting-out of the dwelling house to include 2 rear balconettes and the erection of a roof structure, providing access to the flat roof.

Approved 4 March 1986

4.0 Proposal

The proposal is for the refurbishment of the existing property to include the following elements:

Internal Alterations: Ground floor

1. Reduction in hallway width from 1.7m as per existing to 1m using stud wall partition and subsequent increase in the dining room width by the same amount.
2. Addition of glazed panel between hallway and kitchen/dining room siting perpendicular to the hallway partition wall.
3. Re-using existing double doors positioned centrally within stud wall between hallway and dining room and removal of 2 no. existing cupboard housing electrical mains/fuse box.
4. Removal of partition wall between dining room and kitchen whilst retaining nibs on either end.
5. 1.2m section of kitchen work top against partition wall between dining room and kitchen to be removed. Installation of additional sink unit in front of existing rear window in kitchen.

Internal Alterations: Basement floor

6. Existing bathroom to be removed and study enlarged to create lounge. Sauna retained with new partition wall running the width of the room.
7. Existing utility room to be replaced by new wet room.



8. Existing 2 no. storage cupboards to be removed and replaced by small utility room with folding door.
9. Existing storage space accessed off lounge to be enlarged with removal of existing double doors and partition walls encasing the stairs.

External Alterations: Basement floor

10. Rear courtyard area to be covered with new structural low-iron glazing with no timber or metal structure to match neighbouring property at 23 Mercer Street. This area will be used as additional (covered) storage for the property.

5.0 Listing Description

The application was listed at Grade II on 15 January 1973 along with 25 Mercer Street. The list description from the 1999 resurvey by Camden by English Heritage states:

“Pair of terraced houses. Late C17, altered, with shopfronts renewed 1978-85 by Terry Farrell as part of his refurbishment of the Comyn Ching Triangle. Multi-coloured stock brick with parapets. No. 25 with weatherboarded attic under a pantile roof. No. 2: 3 storeys, attic and basement. 2 Windows. Wooden panelled and pilastered shopfront with panelled door to right and single, centrally placed, sash window, under a slightly projecting upswept cornice. To first and second floor gauged segmental brick arches to flush sash windows with exposed boxing and original glazing bars. No. 27: 4 storeys (4th storey a C19 addition) and panelled door to right and 2 sash windows under a cornice. To 1st and 2nd floor gauged segmental brick arches to flush sash windows with exposed boxing. To 3rd floor gauges flat arches to recessed windows. INTERIORS: not inspected”

6.0 Relevant Planning Policies

This section details national and local policies relevant to alteration and extensions to listed buildings and properties in conservation areas.



National and Regional Policy

The NPPF, specifically Chapter 12 entitled 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment' notes that *"local planning authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. In doing so, they should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance. In developing this strategy, local planning authorities should take into account:*

- *The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting those viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- *The wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;*
- *The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and*
- *Opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of place"*

Paragraphs 132 states that 'when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation'. The paragraph continues to state that 'Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional'.

Paragraph 134 states that 'Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal'.

London Plan Policy 7.8 entitled 'Heritage Assets and Archaeology' states 'development affecting heritage assets and their setting should conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to their form, scale, materials and architectural detail'.



Local Policy

The existing development plan for the London Borough of Camden comprises the Core Strategy and the Development Management policies. The following policies within the Core Strategy are relevant to the proposed development:

- Policy CS14 – Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage

The following policies within the Development Management document are relevant:

- Policy DP24 – Securing high quality design
- Policy DP25 – Conserving Camden’s heritage
- Policy DP26 – Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours

The following supplementary planning guidance is relevant:

- Camden Planning Guidance (CPG) 1 : Design

7.0 Heritage Impact Assessment

The impact of the proposed works on the heritage of the building have been discussed in a separate Heritage Statement document submitted as part of this application – please refer to this for more details.

8.0 Assessment of scheme against relevant policies

Internal works

The majority of the works proposed are internal and therefore do not require planning permission and only listed building consent. Policy CS14, in respect of promoting high quality places and conserving heritage, states that the Council will require development of the highest standard of design that respects local context and character. Policy DP25 states that in respect of Camden’s conservation areas, the Council will only permit development within conservation areas that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area. The policy states that in respect of listed buildings, the Council



will only grant consent for a change of use or alterations and extensions to a listed building where it considers this would not cause harm to the special interest of the building.

The Heritage Statement discusses the impact of the works on the historic importance of the property, however it is noted that the alterations are not significant enough to harm the fabric of the listed building and in this regard do not adversely affect the special interest of the building as a heritage asset. As such the proposed internal works in this regard are considered acceptable and comply with Policies CS14 and DP25.

External works

The structural low-iron glazing cover over the rear courtyard would require both listed building consent and planning permission. Again Policies CS14 and DP25 are both relevant in regards to this element of the proposal. In terms of design, Policy DP24 states that the Council will require all developments, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, to be of the highest standard of design including the quality of materials to be used and respecting the character and proportions of the host building and the neighbouring properties. Finally CPG 1 expands on the design and heritage principles detailed in the respective planning policies. A 'key message' message is that alterations should always take into account the character and design of the property and its surroundings.

The proposed canopy over the courtyard takes into account that approved scheme at 23 Mercer Street albeit this was granted before the current plan period. Whilst the pre-application advice states that the covering over the rear area would tend to conceal the rear elevation of the building and so would not be encouraged, there is considered no significant harm from this element of the scheme to warrant a reason for refusal. Furthermore this element of the scheme is discussed in greater detail in the Heritage Statement which concludes that such a structure is considered to have a 'neutral impact on the significance of the listed building'.

In terms of its design and appearance the proposed glaze over would be located to the rear of the building at a low level. Whilst the courtyard amenity space is attractive, the



proposed structure is of a modest scale, subservient to the main house and would not visually detract views to the rear of this property and the adjoining neighbours. In addition to this No. 23 already contains a similar canopy. It is our opinion that it would be unjustified to refuse the application for a high quality single piece glaze-over that respects the character, materials and proportions of the host property and surrounding area. Given the nature and scale of the proposal the proposal will not harm the neighbouring properties; in reality the glazed-over section would provide a greater perception of privacy for the occupiers of the basement from users of the courtyard. As such this element of the proposal is considered acceptable and complies with the Council's relevant policies and guidance.

9.0 Access and Parking

The proposed scheme will not affect existing parking and access arrangements and in this regard the proposal is considered acceptable and policy compliant.

10.0 Conclusion:

The application property is in need of some refurbishment to make the most efficient use of the space and internal arrangements to suit the current occupiers who wish to spend a significant amount of time in the property to raise a family. The proposal has been changed significantly from that submitted as part of the pre-application advice. The proposed works are considered sympathetic to the internal configuration, external appearance and historic significance of this Grade II listed heritage asset. Additionally the scheme does not adversely affect the design and appearance of the existing building or surrounding properties in terms of overbearing, overshadowing or invasion of privacy. As such the scheme is considered acceptable and complies with the Council's relevant policies and guidance. It is therefore respectfully requested that the Council grant both listed building consent and planning permission.