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Date: 18/01/2016

Planning Services
Camden Council
5 Pancras Square
London
N1C 4AG

Dear Sir,

APPLICATION FOR LISTED BUILDING CONSENT FOR INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ALTERATIONS TO 15- 17 BRUNSWICK CENTRE, LONDON, WC1N 1BX

We have been instructed by our client, Las Iguanas Restaurants, to submit the enclosed listed building consent application (online via the planning portal ref: PP-04766521) for internal and external alterations at the above address.

The application comprises the following documents:

- Planning, Heritage, Design and Access Statement set out within this letter;
- Photographs of Site and Surrounding Area;
- Drawings:
 - 1004_225: Site Location Plan;
 - 1004_226: Block Plan;
 - 1004_101_EXT: Existing Ground Floor Plan;
 - 1004_100_GAP: Proposed GA Plan- Ground Floor;
 - 1004_121_EXT: Existing Plan- Basement and Lower Basement;
 - 1004_120_GAP: Proposed GA Plan- Basement and Lower Basement;
 - 1004_223: Existing Shopfront Elevations;
 - 1004_221: Proposed Shopfront Elevations;
 - 1004_106_RCP: Reflected Ceiling Plan- Ground Floor;
 - 1004_126_RCP: Reflected Ceiling Plan- Basement and Lower Basement;
 - 1004_1-4_FFP: Floor Finishes Plan- Ground Floor Plan;
 - 1004_124_FFP: Floor Finishes Plan- Basement and Lower Basement;
 - 1004_105_WFP: Wall Finishes Plan- Ground Floor;
 - 1004_125_WFP: Wall Finishes Plan- Basement and Lower Basement;
 - 1004_220: Proposed External Seating Area and Shopfront;
 - 1004_224: Proposed Signage Details.

This application is for listed building consent only and therefore no fee is payable.

Site Description

The Brunswick Centre is a Grade II listed, mixed-use shopping and residential development located in Russell Square/ Bloomsbury. The Brunswick Centre is bounded by Brunswick Square to the east and Marchmont Street to the west. The building is also located within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. Residential accommodation sits above ground floor level commercial units and a two-levelled basement car park.

The application site is located at 15-17 Brunswick Centre; on the eastern side of the building, adjacent to the Brunswick Square entrance. It forms part of the commercial area, which is a pedestrianised central strip surrounded by retail and restaurant units.

Nos. 15 -17 Brunswick Centre was, until recently, occupied by Strada, an Italian restaurant.

Planning History

Refurbishment of the Brunswick Centre was granted in 2002 (ref: **PSX0104561** and **LSX0104562**) with Condition 12, which required the submission of a signage strategy for all commercial units.

As set out above, the site was previously home to a Strada Restaurant, and Listed Building Consent (ref: **2006/3422/L**) was granted in 2006 for 'internal and external alterations in connection with the fit out of the shop unit and display of fascia signs with internally illuminated lettering'.

Proposed Schedule of Works

The application proposals seek listed building consent for internal alterations, shopfront alterations/ signage (including advertisements on external furniture, located to the front of the unit. The placing of the external furniture itself does not require permission).

A concurrent application has been submitted for advertisement consent, by the signage contractors.

The proposed works within this listed building consent application are minimal and comprise:

External alterations

- 1 no. replacement sign comprising 'Las Iguanas' vinyl lettering to be applied to existing projecting sign (960mm x 100mm x 585mm);
- 2 no. internally hung 'Las Iguanas' internally illuminated signs measuring 440mm x 1800mm x 50mm;
- 2 no. 900mm x 600mm x 50mm internally hung, illuminated menu boards;
- Signage on external furniture to the front of the unit (please refer to concurrent advertisement application submitted by the contractors for full information. The placing of the external furniture does not require planning or listed building consent).

Internal alterations

- Removal and relocation of bar area;
- Removal and relocation of kitchen wall;
- Walls within WCs to be re-painted and remainder of walls to be retained and made good;
- Removal of existing ground floor ceiling to expose concrete soffit. Remainder of ceiling to be retained and made good;

- Sanding and staining on timber floor throughout, re-tiling of WC flooring and bar/ back of house area, remainder of floor to be deep cleaned;
- Installation of new fixed seating booths.

Planning Policy

Within the London Borough of Camden the statutory development plan is comprised of the Camden Core Strategy and Development Policies DPDs (both adopted 2010). The Camden Policies Map identifies the site as falling within the Central London Area and the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. It also falls within a dedicated Neighbourhood Centre.

The building is a Grade II Listed Building. The main considerations are therefore the proposals effect on the character and appearance of the Listed Building and the wider Conservation Area and the impact on surrounding occupiers.

The relevant planning policies are outlined below.

Core Strategy DPD

Policy CS3 promotes appropriate development in highly accessible areas, including Central London.

Policy CS5 refers to managing the impact of growth and development by making sure the impact of developments is considerate to neighbours and occupiers and protects and enhances the heritage.

Policy CS7 relates to the promotion of successful and vibrant centres, specifically by:

- seeking to protect and enhance the role and unique character of each of Camden's centres, ensuring that new development is of an appropriate scale and character for the centre in which it is located;
- providing for, and maintaining, a range of shops, services, food, drink and entertainment and other suitable uses to provide variety, vibrancy and choice;
- making sure that food, drink and entertainment uses do not have a harmful impact on residents and the local area.

Policy CS14 promotes high quality places conserving its heritage; particularly by;

- requiring development of the highest standard of design that respects local context and character;
- preserving and enhancing Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings;
- seeking the highest standards of access in all buildings and places and requiring schemes to be designed to be inclusive and accessible.

Development Policies DPD

Policy DPD12 outlines how the Council will ensure that the development of shopping, services, food, drink, entertainment and other town centre uses does not cause harm to the character,

function, vitality and viability of a centre, the local area or the amenity of neighbours through implementation of, where appropriate, planning conditions and obligations.

Policy DPD24 relates to good design, the requirements are for all developments to be of the highest standard and to consider;

- character and proportions of the existing building, where alterations and extensions are proposed;
- the quality of materials to be used;
- the provision of visually interesting frontages at street level and accessibility.

Policy DPD25 relates to conserving heritage. In order to maintain the character of Camden's Conversation Areas and Listed Buildings the Council will;

- take account of conservation area statements, appraisals and management plans when assessing applications with conservation areas;
- only permit development within conservation areas that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area;
- prevent the total or substantial demolition of a listed building unless exceptional circumstances are shown that outweigh the case for retention;
- not permit development that it considers would cause harm to the setting of a listed building;
- 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.

Policy DPD30 expresses the need for a high standard of design in new and altered shopfronts, the Council will pay particular attention to:

- the design of the shopfront or feature;
- the existing character, architectural and historic merit and design of the building and its shopfront;
- 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;
- the general characteristics of shopfronts in the area

Further guidance is provided in the Camden Planning Guidance that is of particular relevance to this application.

Camden Planning Guidance - CGP1 Design (2015)

The Council has recently adopted updated versions of CPG1 Design. The guidance states that there is a statutory requirement to have special regard to preserving a Listed Building and the expectation is for original features to be retained. Furthermore, applications for Listed Building

Consent 'should be fully justified and should demonstrate how proposals would affect the significance of a listed building and why the works or changes are desirable or necessary'.

Special attention is made here for the importance of inclusive access for all to Listed Buildings.

CGP1 includes shopfront guidance which emphasises Policy DPD30; stating that shopfront alterations should respect the detailed design, materials, colour and architectural features of the shopfront and building itself.

Heritage Statement

Character of the Listed Building and Conservation Area

The Historic England listing (ref: 1246230) states that the listed building, which comprises the complete Brunswick Centre, is a 1967-72 two linked blocks of 560 flats, incorporating rows of shops at raised ground level over basement car -parking on two levels, with attached workshops, ramps and steps. The key features identified are metal windows, and metal balustrading to concrete balconies and regularly spaced lift-shafts, staircases and ventilator towers. The listing describes the shopping centres as;

“the structure is left open save for the cinema, largely glazed and with glazed doors. The internal finishes of the flats, shops and cinema have been inspected and are not of special interest”.

Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (2011)

The Bloomsbury Conservation Area and Appraisal and Management Strategy defines the special interest of the Conservation Area in order that its key attributes are understood and can be protected, and that measures are put in place to ensure appropriate enhancement of the area.

The Brunswick Centre is described as a post-war monolithic concrete megastructure occupying an entire street block on the west side of Brunswick Square. There are elements of the streetscape surrounding the Brunswick Centre which are of interest and since its refurbishment the shops and restaurants grouped around its open-air precinct have become a popular focal point. The Brunswick Centre is not mentioned as having any shopfronts, or internal fit outs, of conservational merit.

Contribution of the Site

The Brunswick Centre as described in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal as a large mixed residential and retail scheme which remains true to the character of the Conservation Area through the strong parapet lines, use of banding to articulate storey heights, long, continuous frontages of development, a relatively consistent and close relationship to the street and generally rectilinear form of blocks.

The application site, a small part of the Brunswick Centre, was previously home to a restaurant and still holds permission for restaurant and café use (Class A3). In isolation it makes no specific contribution to the character of the conservation area or indeed the listed building – it is only one part of this monolithic structure.

The Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal, and Historic England, both note that the internal aspects of the Brunswick Centre are of no particular merit or interest. The external elevations comprise metal windows, metal balustrading and concrete. The Historic England listing makes note of the glazed windows glazed doors which appears to be a key feature in the shops

here. Collectively the commercial units are thought to make a positive contribution to the wider listed building and the conservation area.

Impact of the Proposed Works

The proposals in this application will not have a major adverse impact on the Listed Building or the Conservation Area. The site already has permission for Class A3 use and has already benefited from a restaurant fit-out, some of which will be maintained and utilised.

Historic England and the Conservation Area Appraisal both note that the internal unit of the building is not of any particular importance. Therefore the removal and relocation of minor internal walls, together with the application of new finishes throughout, and works to the concrete ceiling, will not affect the external appearance, original features, or features of significance, of the Listed Building. So these works should be deemed acceptable, in accordance with Core Strategy Policy DPD25.

The external alterations aim to reflect Las Iguanas' occupation only, utilising the existing shop front in its entirety, but changing the signage where necessary. The position of the projecting sign is retained.

The proposal is for two internally illuminated signs and two internally illuminated menu signs, similar to that of the previous occupier, and similar to other units in the vicinity. The broad emphasis of the proposal is consistent with Core Strategy Policy DPD30 and DPD25.

The combined impact on the listed building is therefore negligible. There will be no lasting impact resulting from the minor nature of the works proposed and all works are, more or less, limited to those areas not highlighted for being of particular historical significance.

Planning Assessment

The principle issues for consideration relate to the impact on the heritage assets. This is assessed above in the Heritage Statement. The remaining considerations relate to the design and impact on the surrounding amenities.

In this regard, the proposed shopfront and interior works comply with Policy DPD30 and DPD24 in ensuring good design by reflecting the wider area through similar design features. The proposals remain in accordance with Policy CS14 by maintaining access for all.

Finally, there would be no impact on the vitality or viability of the nearby shopping frontages, as the site remains in Class A3 restaurant use. This is compliant with Policy DPD12 and CS7.

Design and Access Statement

Use

The site comprises a Class A3 restaurant use within the Brunswick Centre (nos 15 -17). This will not change.

Scale and Amount

The shopfront alterations aim to successfully advertise the proposed Las Iguanas restaurant and retain the character of the other retail and restaurants in the area. There are no proposals to alter any of the original building's façade.

Internally the proposed works aim to refurbish and update the interior to reflect the company image. Internal walls will be removed together with the existing ground floor ceiling finish. These works will have no impact on the structural integrity of the building or its historical features.

Appearance

The proposed alterations aim to express the Las Iguanas image whilst retaining the original features and heritage significance of the site and the wider area.

Landscaping

There is no landscaping proposed.

Access

There are no changes to the access of the site, these are to remain as existing.

Conclusion

The proposals will revive the appearance of the shopfront and the interior of the building, in compliance with policies CS5 CS7, DPD12 and DPD24, whilst ensuring that the key heritage features of the building are conserved and enhanced, in accordance with Policy CS14, DPD25 and CPG1.

Therefore it is considered that these proposals are in compliance with the Councils policies and guidance, and therefore should be considered acceptable. Should you have any questions in the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,



SAM HARPER
Director

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