

GL/P6456  
15 November 2016

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

Dear Sirs

**Proposed removal of front railings and infill of lightwells at 4-5 Bernard Street, London, WC1N 1LJ.  
PP- 05617195**

On behalf of our client, Franco Manca, please find attached a planning permission for the above.  
This application is accompanied by the following:

- Site location plan
- Drawings
- Design and access statement
- Heritage report
- Cheque for £195.00
- CIL form

**Site and Location**

The site is part of a terrace of three properties located immediately adjacent to the west side of Russell Square tube station. The properties are also on the junction of Bernard St and Herband Street. No. 4 and 5 Bernard St are Class A3 restaurant establishments.

No 4 and 5 Bernard Street are not listed. The development site is located within the Bloomsbury Conservation area.

Russell Square tube station is surrounded by commercial properties comprising of Class A1 retail, Class B1 (a) offices and Class A3 restaurant uses. The busy Brunswick Centre Shopping Precinct is also approximately 100 metres away.

Russell Square Tube station is Grade II listed as is the residential terrace of 11 to 28 Bernard St.

**Planning History**

In April 2016 a certificate of lawfulness for 4- 5 Bernard St was approved for the use of the site as a restaurant/café (Class A3) at ground and basement levels (2016/1672/P).

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November 2016

In September 2016 planning permission was granted for a replacement existing shopfront and awning to restaurant Class A3 at 5 Bernard St (2016/2605/P).

**Proposal**

The previous tenants vacated earlier this year after occupying the premises for some time (more than 10years). The previous shopfronts were tired, outdated and in need of improvement. The new occupiers, Franco Manca and Tortilla wish to improve the front appearance of the properties. Tortilla has already installed their new shopfront which was granted permission earlier this year. This application seeks the removal of existing railings to the front and the infilling of the front lightwells at both properties. Both Franco Manca and their neighbour, Tortilla, consider that the proposed alterations would provide an unrestricted ground floor frontage and improved presence for the active commercial premises.

The existing railings are modern replacements and the infilling of the lightwells with glazed blocks will ensure the legible reference to the original plan, layout and/or configuration of the building continues to be retained.

A detailed heritage statement accompanies this application and examines the historical and architectural benefits of the proposals.

**Policy**

The development plan for Camden is the Core Strategy adopted version 2010 and the Development Management Plan adopted version 2010. This application also looks at the Bloomsbury Conservation Appraisal and Management Strategy 2011.

Core Strategy Policy CS14 promotes high quality places and conserving our heritage.

DP 24 Securing high quality design and the Council will require all developments, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, to be of the highest standard of design and will expect developments to consider the "*character, setting, context and the form of scale of neighbouring properties*" and "*the character and proportions of the existing building, where alterations and extensions are proposed*".

Para 24.17 states "*buildings should be visually interesting at street level, with entrances and windows used to create active frontages, which allow overlooking of public areas, provide a sense of vitality and contribute to making Camden a safer. Ground floors should be occupied by active uses and should not turn their back on streets and other public spaces*".

The proposed development comprises of high quality alterations and would result in an improved appearance to the properties to what existed/ currently exists. The modern railings and lightwells restrict the presence of these active uses at ground floor level. By opening up these frontages this will result in a greater sense of vitality to this part of the borough. It would also improve the safety of those accessing the tube station next door. This proposal is of the highest standard of design that respects local context and character.

DP25 Conserving Camden's heritage and the Council will "*only permit development within conservation area that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area*".

Camden Council  
November 2016

The Bloomsbury Conservation appraisal 2011 notes the site is located within Sub Area 11. Within the appraisal it does not note that the railings outside no. 4 and 5 Bernard St as being 'elements of Streetscape interest' nor does it acknowledge no. 4 or 5 Bernard St as being positive contributors to the conservation area. The railings are modern replacements and the original layout of the lightwell will still be ensured as part of the proposal. The character and appearance of the conservation area will be enhanced by an improved open frontage and commercial presence to what is there currently. The proposed development also preserves and enhances the conservation area and the setting of nearby listed buildings. Further details are contained in the accompanying heritage statement that supports this proposal.

**Summary**

The existing frontage of both properties are tired and in need of updating. The railings nor the properties themselves are recognised as being positive contributors in the Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal.

The accompanying heritage assessment concludes that the proposals both preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area and the settings of nearby listed buildings, whilst not adversely affecting the special interest of these. This would be achieved by referencing original architectural detailing whilst ensuring that proposals do not form a dominant and/or visually prominent feature in the context of relevant heritage assets and/or their wider environment. The design therefore preserves and enhances the character of both the settings of surrounding listed buildings and the wider context of these comprising the surrounding conservation area. Neither would it adversely affect the inherent interest of the site and the contribution this makes to the wider historic environment. It is evident that special regard has been had for nos. 4-5 Bernard Street, the setting of these and therefore the wider historic environment.

The proposals seek to perpetuate a positive contribution to the conservation area by preserving and enhancing the property and its value to the designation. The application also seeks to improve the active ground floor frontages of these commercial properties. The proposed development is therefore in accordance with the development plan policies as referenced in this application.

If you have any further queries please do not hesitate to let me know.

Yours faithfully



For and on behalf of  
Rolfe Judd Planning Limited

cc Tom Byng

Franco Manca