

RL/CC/P6462
15 December 2016

London Borough of Camden
Planning Department
Town Hall
Judd Street
London
WC1H 9JE

Dear Sirs

30-36 MONMOUTH STREET, LONDON, WC2H 9LN
PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE INSTALLATION OF A REPLACEMENT SHOPFRONT AT
30-36 MONMOUTH STREET.

PLANNING PORTAL REF: PP-05687123

We write on behalf of our client and the applicant Shaftesbury Covent Garden Limited, to submit a full planning application for works to the ground floor shopfronts at 30-36 Monmouth Street. This application has been submitted online via the Planning Portal and is accompanied by the following documents:

- Existing and Proposed Drawings
- Site Location Plan
- Design and Access Statement
- Proposed CGI View
- Completed CIL Form

We confirm that the requisite planning application fee of £195.00 is been paid online to the Council.

Site Location and Surrounding Area

The application site 30-36 Monmouth Street, also known as Fielding Court, was constructed in the late 1980s and comprises a four storey building, with three separate retail and restaurant units (Classes A1 and A3) at ground and basement level. Further residential accommodation is split across the four upper floors (Class C3). This application relates solely to the existing retail units at ground floor level fronting Monmouth Street, including those corner elevations fronting Tower Court and Earham Street.

The application site is located in the shopping area of Seven Dials – a specialist retail and fashion destination – on the prominent corner of Earham Street and Monmouth Street fronting the Seven Dials Monument.

The property is not listed, but is within the Covent Garden (Seven Dials) Conservation Area. The

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Seven Dials Renaissance Study 1998 states that the existing building and shopfronts have inappropriate details which undermine the quality of surrounding groups of urban buildings. The shop fronts so far executed are far from ideal. The existing shopfronts should have painted window joinery. The simple form of the corner unit shows that there is scope here for good modern design of a bold form. It is noted that those comments provided by the Renaissance Study has been taken into consideration when preparing the proposed development.

Planning History

Having reviewed the Council's online planning database, the following planning history of relevance to this application is provided in detail below:

- 9200587 - The installation of a new shopfront at 30 Monmouth Street – Approved (12-08-1992)
- PS9705283 - Provision of pull out blinds to front elevation and side elevation windows at 36 Monmouth Street – Withdrawn (04-08-1998)
- 2004/3220/P - Installation of folding opening shopfront to south elevation of coffee shop (class A1) at 36 Monmouth Street – Approved (04-10-2004).
- 8700538 - The redevelopment of the site of the Texaco petrol filling station by the erection of a building comprising basement ground and part 3/part 4 upper floors for 4 retail units and 15 flats – Approved (09-03-1987)

The Proposal

The proposal seeks to replace the existing shopfronts at 30-36 Monmouth Street. The proposals are driven by a desire to improve the design quality and appearance of the building in a way which is sympathetic to the Seven Dials Conservation Area, whilst respect the architectural integrity of the existing 1980's post-modern building.

The proposal comprises the following elements:

- Increase the width of the each existing shopfront windows by reducing the excessive masonry vertical piers, to be finished in smooth trowelled finish sand cement and painted grey;
- Provision of new cornice detail (Ashlar Cast Bath Stone) to match existing thereby provide simple separation between ground and first floor levels;
- Replace existing metal glazed units with traditional hardwood timber framed shopfronts and glazing with traditional shopfront features (stall-riser, transom line);
- Provision of new fascia band for prospective tenant's signage; and
- Removal of existing bolt-on awnings which are oversized and detract from the buildings elevation.

Please refer to the existing and proposed drawing for full details, as well as the submitted Design and Access Statement for design rationale.

Design and Access Statement

Please refer to the submitted design and access statement, as prepared by architects Merret Houmoller. Access to the residential accommodation will remain unchanged.

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Planning Policy

The key considerations in respect of this application are the proposed design and impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Core Strategy Policy CS7 (Promoting Camden's centres and shops) and Development Policy DP10 (Helping and promoting small and independent shops) seeks to encourage initiatives to support and promote retail diversity within the borough. The Council seek to ensure that all development improves the character, function, viability and vibrancy of the retail provision within designated town centres and specialist retail areas.

In consideration of Policies CS7 and DP10, the proposal would create a more coherent and attractive retail frontage along Monmouth Street, including the focal point of Seven Dials. The refurbishment of the shopfront will therefore represent a benefit to the existing retail units, maximise their future operational use, and enhance the vibrancy and character of Seven Dials as a specialist fashion and retail destination.

Policy CS14 (Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage) and Development Policy DP24 (Securing high quality design) requires all developments, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, to be of the highest standard of design, having specific consideration of; the character, setting, context of the existing building and those surrounding, the quality of materials proposed, and the provision of visually interesting frontages at street level.

The proposed new shopfront has been designed to respond positively to the prevailing built form and composition of the existing building; drawing upon the existing built detail the upper projecting stone cornice detail. The proposal now reduces the existing stone pillars at ground level and widens each window unit to providing improved daylight and retail presence. The proposed shopfronts will be constructed from materials consistent with and complementary to the existing design and period of the post-modern building. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with the wider objectives of Policy CS14 and DP24.

Development Policy DP25 (Conserving Camden's heritage) seeks development within conservation area to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the wider historic environment and buildings, spaces and features of local historic value. In consideration of the proposal, it was considered important to provide a high quality design which was traditional to enhanced the building's contribution to the character and setting of Seven Dials Conservation Area. As a result, the high quality retail frontages will ensure that the wider street scene of Monmouth Street and Earham Street is positively preserved and enhanced; offering new retail and restaurant accommodation which is visually attractive to the wider public realm.

The Seven Dials Conservation Area Appraisal further recognises that a wide variety of design has taken place during the late twentieth century. Such design has been of both modern and traditional, which in combination has mostly enhanced the character and appearance of the area. The proposal has taken into consideration the Conservation Area's design guidelines, stating that appropriate design for the Conservation Area can reflect both the historic and the modern context and both traditional and contemporary materials can be appropriate. It is considered that the proposal's use of traditional detailing and materials is supportive of the wider conservation objectives of the conservation area's guidance and sits comfortably with the buildings post-modern character. Importantly, the proposal would positively preserve and enhance both the character and appearance of Covent Garden (Seven Dials) conservation Area.

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It is therefore considered that the proposal is in accordance with and supportive of Local Planning Policy and Guidance, as detailed above.

Conclusion

This application seeks planning permission for the replacement of the existing shopfronts at 30-36 Monmouth Street. The proposal has been sympathetically designed to respond to the existing architectural language of the building's upper floors whilst providing an enhancement to the building's existing retail function. Through the careful design and use of materials, we consider the proposal provides a high quality replacement shopfront which successfully preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the conservation area.

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. Should you require any further information or would like to arrange a site visit, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours faithfully

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the undersigned.

For and on behalf of
Rolfe Judd Planning Limited