

Design, Heritage and Access Statement for Minor Works

February 2017

Address:

Thomas Neal Centre
35 Earlham Street
London
W2CH

Proposal:

Planning and listed building consent for the installation of a new louvred substation entrance door and louvred panelling fronting shorts gardens with associated internal alterations to allow for a new self-contained substation.

Planning Portal Reference: PP-05850719

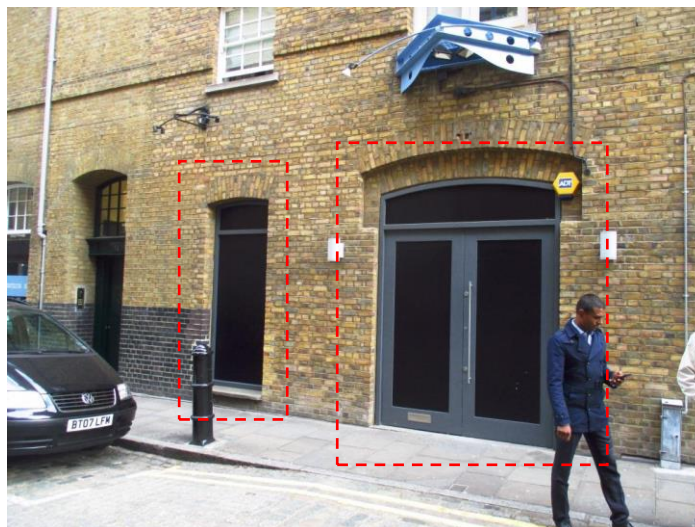
1. Proposal:

The proposal seeks for minor internal and external alterations to allow the installation of a new substation. The works are summarised as follows:

- *External:*
 - o *Replacement window with new louvred substation entrance door, new concrete upstand;*
 - o *New shop entrance double doors and louvred overhead panelling.*
- *Internal:*
 - o *A new self-contained substation room located at ground level constructed from brick;*
 - o *The provision of two earth rods located at basement level to provide safety for ground floor substation;*
 - o *The installation/ connection of new mains cables through existing foundations to enter from the street at basement level and up to ground floor.*

2. Location of proposal:

The application site forms part of the Grade II Listed building known as Thomas Neals Centre. The proposed works are located along the northern elevation of the Thomas Neals Centre fronting Shorts Gardens. Only minor external works are required to the existing shop unit at 9-10 Shorts Gardens to replace an existing window and door (as shown in the photo below).



Existing window and door to be altered.

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Please refer to the existing and proposed drawings for further details.

3. Historic setting of the existing building:

Thomas Neal's Centre is Grade II Listed and is located within the Covent Garden (Seven Dials) Conservation Area. Historic England describes the building, also known as The Craft Centre, as follows:

"Warehouse, probably originally a brewery; now a crafts centre. Mid C19. Stock brick; roof not visible. 3 storeys. 19 bays to Earlham Street, No.43 with splayed corner and return to Neal Street. Shorts Gardens elevation of 2 storeys. Brick band above ground floor. Segmental headed windows and doorways, those to ground floor on Earlham Street elevation set in segmental headed reveals. INTERIOR: internal structure comprises brick barrel vaults supported by cast-iron columns. Nos 29-41 (odd) and Nos 8-26 (even) Shorts Gardens were listed on 10/03/88"

Further, the 1998 Renaissance Study for Seven Dials describes the building as follows:

"Nos. 31-39 Thomas Neals –

After the removal of the brewery in 1905 much of this block became a box factory for J Lyons & Co, whose name, somewhat faded, could until recently be seen aboith the archway at No. 33. Two of the ground floor windows have fine Victorian cast iron grilles. Details likes these are of historic interest and should be retained. The simple, dignified industrial architecture has a massive grandeur.

No 41 Thomas Neals –

Was rebuilt in 1882 as a warehouse by the brewery and is similar to No. 43 on the corner of Neal Street. It was for many years the Donmar Theatre Warehouse. The building forms part of the Kleinwort Bension Property Fund's Thomas Neals Development completed in 1992. It provides a mixture of uses including shops, theatre, restaurant, office and residential within the retained facades, and a reinstatement of Cucumber Alley as a shopping mall between Earlham Street and Shorts Gardens. The brick work has been unfortunately over cleaned and the pointing is too harsh".

The historic picture (dated 1956) below shows the existing site and Thomas Neals Centre in relation to where the proposed works are located. The image shows 4-8 Shorts Gardens and the adjoining Thomas Neals Centre pre 1980's refurbishment works. The image therefore demonstrates that the existing elevation where the works are proposed are non-original. Nonetheless, due care has been taken so not to impact upon the building's overall appearance and setting.

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Archive Photograph along Shorts Gardens dated 1957

4. Relationship to existing building:

The proposed works relate to the existing function of Thomas Neals Centre. UKPN have required that Shaftesbury allow the provision of a new substation within the building to ensure sufficient power can be delivered to the building for the future. Without the substation, UKPN cannot guarantee sufficient power for future occupiers / inhabitants.

The proposed works have been carefully considered in consultation with UKPN, the applicant Shaftesbury and wider project team to ensure the proposed location is the most appropriate. Other locations were considered within the building, however those identified were felt to have a greater impact upon the Listed building.

5. Impact on amenity:

The proposed works related to the installation of a new substation are deemed to be minor and will not impact upon the amenity of existing commercial or residential occupiers located nearby.

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6. Design (e.g. scale, mass and bulk):

The proposal's external works will not enlarge the existing window and door openings; therefore they will not impact upon the historic fabric of the building. The proposed doors will be constructed from metal louvred panels, as required by UKPN.

The internal works will provide a simple self-contained room for the proposed substation constructed from brick and will not impact upon or disturb any of the building's original fabric. The proposed substation room has been provided in consultation with UKPN and allows sufficient access space for future servicing with internal doors fitted to the interior of the existing shop unit for secondary access.

7. Consideration of accessibility to and between parts of the proposed works:

The proposed substation will be accessible from Shorts Gardens via the newly created louvred doorway. A secondary means of access will be provided internally from the existing shop unit which will be used for planned / one-off upgrade works to the substation in the future. This will avoid the enlargement of the primary access arrangements onto Shorts Gardens.

8. Relationship between proposal and public routes:

The proposal will not impact upon the existing public routes.

9. Choice of materials:

The proposed materials have been chosen in consultation with UKPN to ensure compliance with their safety and security needs. The proposed louvred panelling will be constructed from metal and finished in black.

The new internal walls will be constructed from brick and finished in plaster to match the existing retail unit.

The proposed materials are considered both appropriate and necessary. The materials would replicate that found elsewhere on the building and used for an existing substation located on the corner of Neals Street and Shorts Gardens, as seen in the photo below:

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Example of Existing Substation Door

10. Impact on street scene:

The proposed works are deemed to be minor and will not impact upon the character or appearance of the surrounding street scene of Shorts Gardens or the wider setting of Seven Dials Conservation Area.
