

RL/P6781  
16 August 2017

Development Management  
London Borough of Camden  
Camden Town Hall  
Judd Street  
London  
WC1H 9JE

Dear Sirs

**THOMAS NEALS CENTRE, 35 EARLHAM STREET, LONDON, WC2H**

**PLANNING AND LISTED BUILDING CONSENT APPLICATION FOR A NEW LOUVRED DOOR  
AND AIR-BRICK FRONTING SHORTS GARDENS**

**PLANNING PORTAL REF. PP-06296104**

On behalf of our client, Shaftesbury Covent Garden Limited, we write in support of a planning and listed building application for the above works at Thomas Neal's Centre (fronting Shorts Gardens).

The following documents and supporting information has been submitted electronically online via the Planning Portal to accompany both planning and listed building applications:

- Existing and Proposed Drawings
- Design, Heritage and Access Statement
- Completed CIL Form

The requisite application fee of £195 has been paid online via credit card.

*Site Location and Context*

This application relates to the historic warehouse building of Thomas Neal's Centre which comprises a variety of uses ranging from predominately commercial retail (Class A1) and restaurant (Class A3) accommodation at basement and ground floors, to office (Class B1) and residential (Class C3) accommodation located on the building's upper floors. The proposed works relate to a former unit (Unit 9-10) fronting Shorts Gardens to facilitate the provision of a refuse store within the internal confinements of Thomas Neals Centre.

The former unit is currently vacant and accessed from Short Gardens via a set of timber and glass double doors. The unit and adjoining doors are currently undergoing works to provide a new substation at ground level in accordance with Planning Permission ref. 2017/1369/P and Listed

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Building Consent ref. 2017/2501/L.

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"*

The existing unit is stripped back and has no identified original or historic features. The existing floor is concrete and the adjoining party walls are constructed from modern block work. It is recognised that the existing elevation is none original and implemented as part of the wider refurbishment works undertaken in the 1980's.

#### Planning History

Having reviewed the Council's online planning database, a number of internal listed building works have been consented over the past 10 years, largely for the alteration of internal partition walls and associated minor external works. Those recent consents deemed to be of relevance to this application are detailed below:

On 16<sup>th</sup> February 1989, planning permission (ref. 8800273) was granted for *"the refurbishment alteration, extension, and change of use to provide a mixed development comprising theatre, residential, retail, restaurant and business uses"*. An associated listed building consent was also issued for works to the historic building (ref. 8870111).

On 5<sup>th</sup> June 2010, further comprehensive works to the Thomas Neal's Centre was consented by the Council for *"internal and external works in association with use of shopping mall including Class A1 shop units and former ancillary circulation space at basement and ground floor (including 80sq.m of additional floor space created by part infilling to atrium at ground floor) for Class A1 (retail) use, dual use of existing Class A3 kiosk for either Class A3 (café) use or Class A1 (retail) use, change of use of 18sq.m of Class A1 (retail) floor space to Class D1 (theatre use) and erection of solar panels to the inward facing roof slope adjacent to Shorts Gardens"* (ref. 2010/2716/P and 2010/2742/L)". This has now been implemented.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2017, planning and listed building consent was granted for *"the installation of a louvred substation entrance door and louvred panelling above the entrance double doors to the shop unit 9-10 fronting Shorts Gardens with associated internal alterations for a new self-contained substation"*.

#### The Application Proposal

Following the recent refurbishment works at Thomas Neals Centre by Shaftesbury and further detailed discussions with the Estate Management Team, a new refuse store is proposed within the former unit for use by existing and future tenants. To facilitate this new refuse store, suitable doors will be required which provide sufficient natural ventilation to the internal space.

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As a result, the proposal therefore seeks the installation of a new louvred door (to match the approved substation works) which will provide sufficient ventilation to the space and prevent possible smells. Associated with the new door will be a new iron air brick (tradition in form and design) which will provide fresh natural ventilation to the existing management office at basement level.

It is important to note that the proposal has been carefully considered / designed to ensure the proposed works do not impact upon any of the original or historic building fabric. The proposal would only remove the modern timber doors and not seek the enlargement of the existing door opening.

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

*Design, Heritage and Access Statement*

Please refer to the submitted design, heritage and access statement for further details.

*Planning Policy Consideration*

It is considered that the proposed planning and listed building works to Thomas Neal's Centre are consistent with and supportive of Camden's local policy and guidance.

Local Plan Policy D1 (Design) provides guidance on the design of new development, alterations and extensions to ensure that all parts of Camden's environment are designed to the highest possible standards and contribute to providing a healthy, safe and attractive environment. The Council will require that all development to consider the character, setting and context of neighbouring buildings; to ensure the use of high quality materials; and the appropriate location for building services equipment with suitable access arrangements.

Local Plan Policy D2 (Heritage) states that the Council will preserve and, where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas and listed buildings. Policy notes that the Council will not permit the loss of or substantial harm to a designated heritage asset unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss. Any development affecting a heritage asset will be required to preserve or, where possible, enhance the character or appearance of the building and surrounding conservation area. Policy further states that the Council in the assessment of applications will take into account those conservation area statements, appraisals and management strategies.

The proposal has been well considered to ensure the required louvred door and air vent does not affect the appearance or character of the listed building (Thomas Neal's), but also that of the surrounding Seven Dials Conservation Area. The proposed external materials (metal louvred door) would be subtle in appearance and have been carefully considered to match those located elsewhere across the building (including the recently consented adjoining works). It is therefore considered that the proposed works would not cause 'substantial harm to a designated heritage' asset and would ultimately improve the refuse capacity and appearance of Thomas Neals Centre by avoiding the dumping of commercial refuse on the pavements.

It is therefore considered that the proposal would comply with the policy objectives of Local Plan Policies D1 and D2.

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Conclusion

The proposed refuse door (and associated air brick) is required to allow natural ventilation to the new refuse store at Thomas Neal's Centre. The proposal includes the replacement of the existing modern timber and glazed doors with new black louvred doors fronting Shorts Gardens (to match the consented works to the adjoining substation). The works would not cause any impact upon the existing historic fabric of the building.

The proposal has been carefully considered so as to preserve the architectural character and appearance of the Grade II Listed building and that of the surrounding conservation area. The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with plan policy objections of the Local Plan.

We trust you will find the submitted information is sufficient to validate our client's application and we look forward to a swift and positive outcome. Should you require any further details, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours faithfully

*Rupert Litherland*

For and on behalf of  
Rolfe Judd Planning Limited