

Application No:	Consultees Name:	Received:	Comment:	Response:
2019/2739/L	Covent Garden Community Association (Elizabeth Bax, Chair of Planning Subcommittee)	07/07/2019 22:53:45	OBJNOT	<p>Covent Garden Community Association (CGCA) objects to some aspects of these proposals and supports others. There are 4 proposed mural groups, and we have itemised our comments against each below.</p> <p>- SG 001 – Shorts Gardens Text, ES 001 – Earlham Street Text, ES 002 – Earlham Street Text.</p> <p>CGCA OBJECTS STRONGLY to the replacement of the wording “THOMAS NEAL’S” on the Shorts Gardens and Earlham Street façades of the building.</p> <p>Obliteration of the Thomas Neal name would remove an important historical reference that we believe is key to this listed building and to the Seven Dials Estate conservation area.</p> <p>Thomas Neal (or Neale) was the famous father of Seven Dials, having developed the area from fields in the 1690’s. In order to maximise yield to pay for the costs of acquiring the site, he adopted the pattern of triangular rather than rectangular blocks. This allowed for more plots, so increasing ground rent income that was calculated according to frontage lengths at the time. The Thomas Neal’s Centre constitutes one of these triangular blocks. Today he is recorded only by two street names in the area - Neal Street and Neal’s Yard, and on this building where his name is far more prominent.</p> <p>Neale had a wider influence in England at the time as an international entrepreneur and long-standing MP who worked closely with three monarchs. As Master of the Mint he introduced the first ‘National Lottery’ in 1694 and as serial developer he lost his fortune more than once. More information on his extraordinary exploits is available at <a href="https://www.sevendials.com/history/thomas-neale-1641-1699">https://www.sevendials.com/history/thomas-neale-1641-1699</a>.</p> <p>We believe that it is to the advantage of all stakeholders that his name continues to be prominently seen in the public realm of Seven Dials, and his contribution celebrated in the only neighbourhood of London remaining from Stuart times.</p> <p>The only alteration that we might suggest to the mural wording is the addition of an “e” on the end of his name!</p> <p>CGCA would have no objection to separate murals that included the name ‘Seven Dials Market’ on other parts of the facade, but this may be a bit too much given the plethora of other signage being proposed for the brand under application ref. 2019/2738/L.</p> <p>- SG 003 – Shorts Gardens.</p> <p>CGCA does not object in principle to the painting of banana murals on the Shorts Gardens façade.</p> <p>Although there is some debate locally, we feel that the images have some merit as a witty modern development of mural signage found in other parts of Covent Garden, such as the extant ‘Coachwork’ signs on Mercer Street and the ‘Saddlery’ signs Monmouth Street.</p> <p>However, we feel that the images are too large and that they may also be too extensive given the other signage being proposed under application ref. 2019/2738/L.</p>

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We must also comment on an inaccuracy in the application that gives a false impression of the context. The applicant states that "it is clear the existing exterior façade of the Thomas Neal Centre has been vastly altered during the wider refurbishment works undertaken in the late 1980s". We would like to hear where the applicant got the information from! Local people are still around who lived in the streets near the warehouse before the 1980's refurbishment, and they confirm that very little alteration was made to the facades. We can send pictorial evidence by email.

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