

Conservation
area statement



Seven Dials
(Covent Garden)





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SEVEN DIALS (Covent Garden) *Conservation Area Statement*

The aim of this Statement is to provide a clear indication of the Council’s approach to the preservation and enhancement of the Seven Dials (Covent Garden) Conservation Area.

The Statement is for the use of local residents, community groups, businesses, property owners, architects and developers as an aid to the formulation and design of development proposals and change in the area.

The Statement will be used by the Council in the assessment of all development proposals.

Camden has a duty under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to designate as conservation areas any “*areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or historic interest of which it is desirable to preserve.*” Designation provides the basis for policies designed to preserve or enhance the special interest of such an area. Designation also introduces a general control over the demolition of unlisted buildings. The Council’s policies and guidance for conservation areas are contained in the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). This Statement is part of SPG and gives additional detailed guidance in support of UDP policies.

The Statement describes the character of the area, provides an outline of the key issues and identifies development pressures that are currently a cause of concern. The Statement also sets out the key policy framework relevant to the conservation area and formulates specific guidance for it. It is not the intention of the Statement to contain proposals for the enhancement of the public realm of the area.

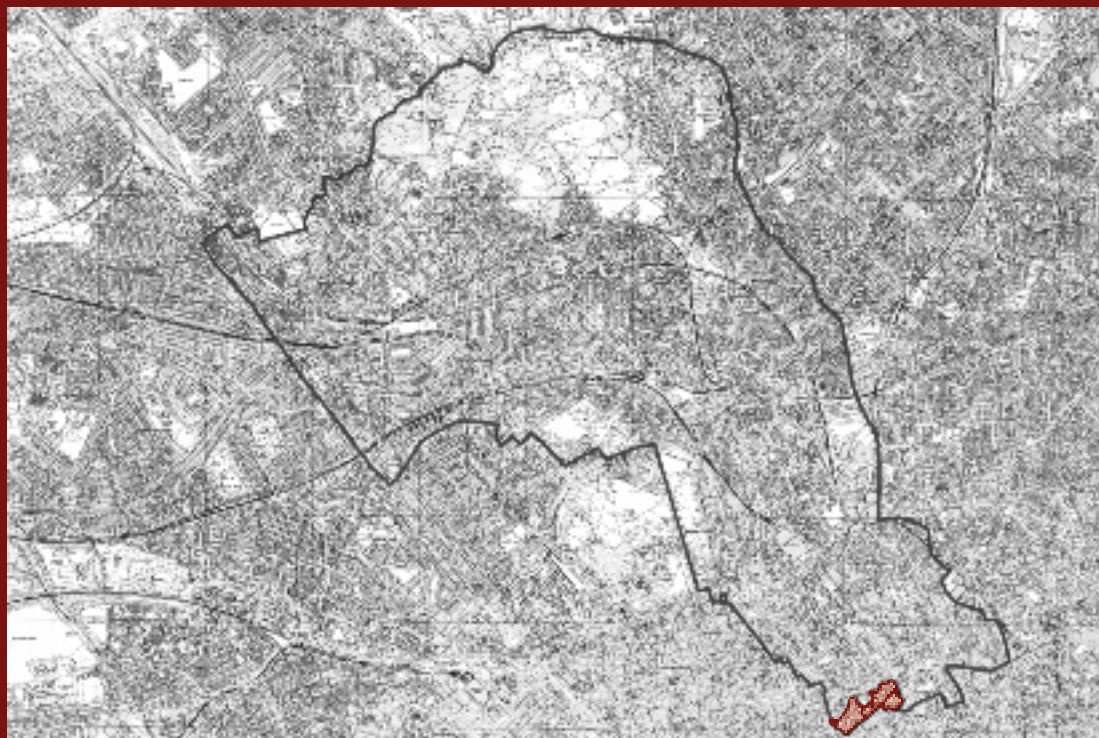
The Seven Dials Monument Charity has produced the Seven Dials Renaissance Report which contains a wide range of proposals for the area. The Handbook is a material consideration in the assessment of development proposals for the Seven Dials Area.

Introduction

This Conservation Area has the imprint of a unique legacy. Vibrant economic activity combined with conservation of the built heritage has created a place that is important to Camden and to London.



Location

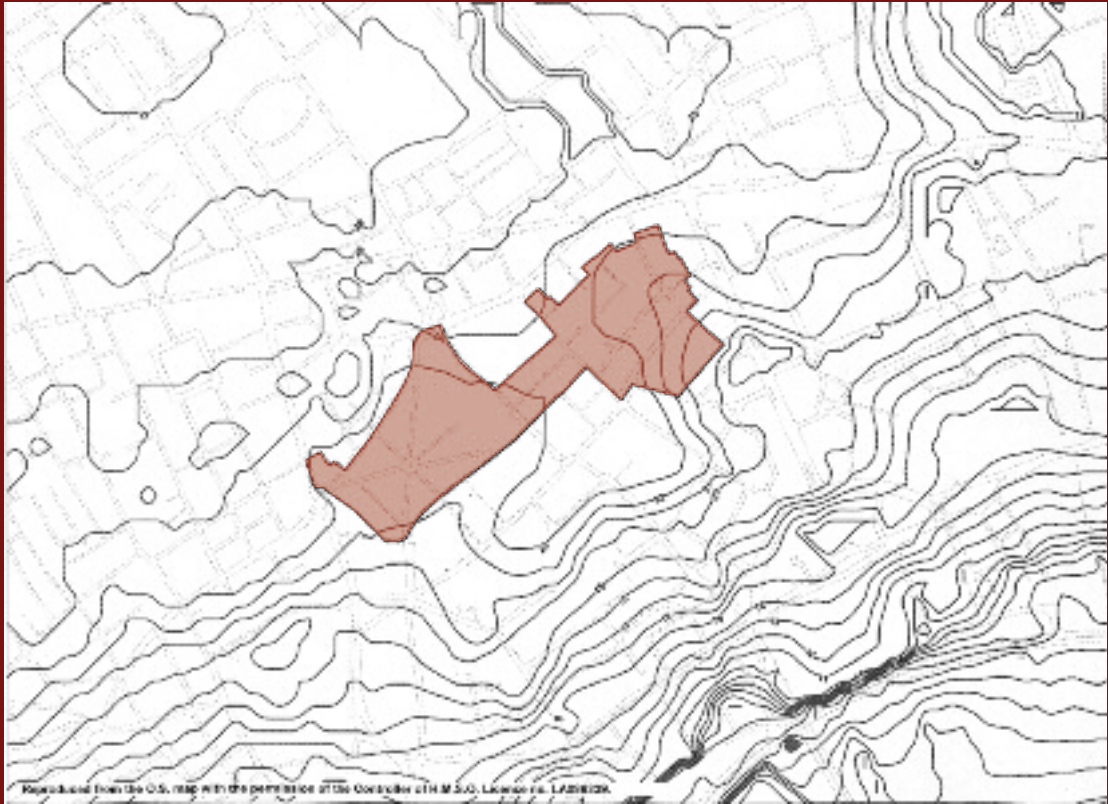


Camden and location of the Conservation Area



Boundary of area and designation date *Westminster Conservation Area*

Location



Topography

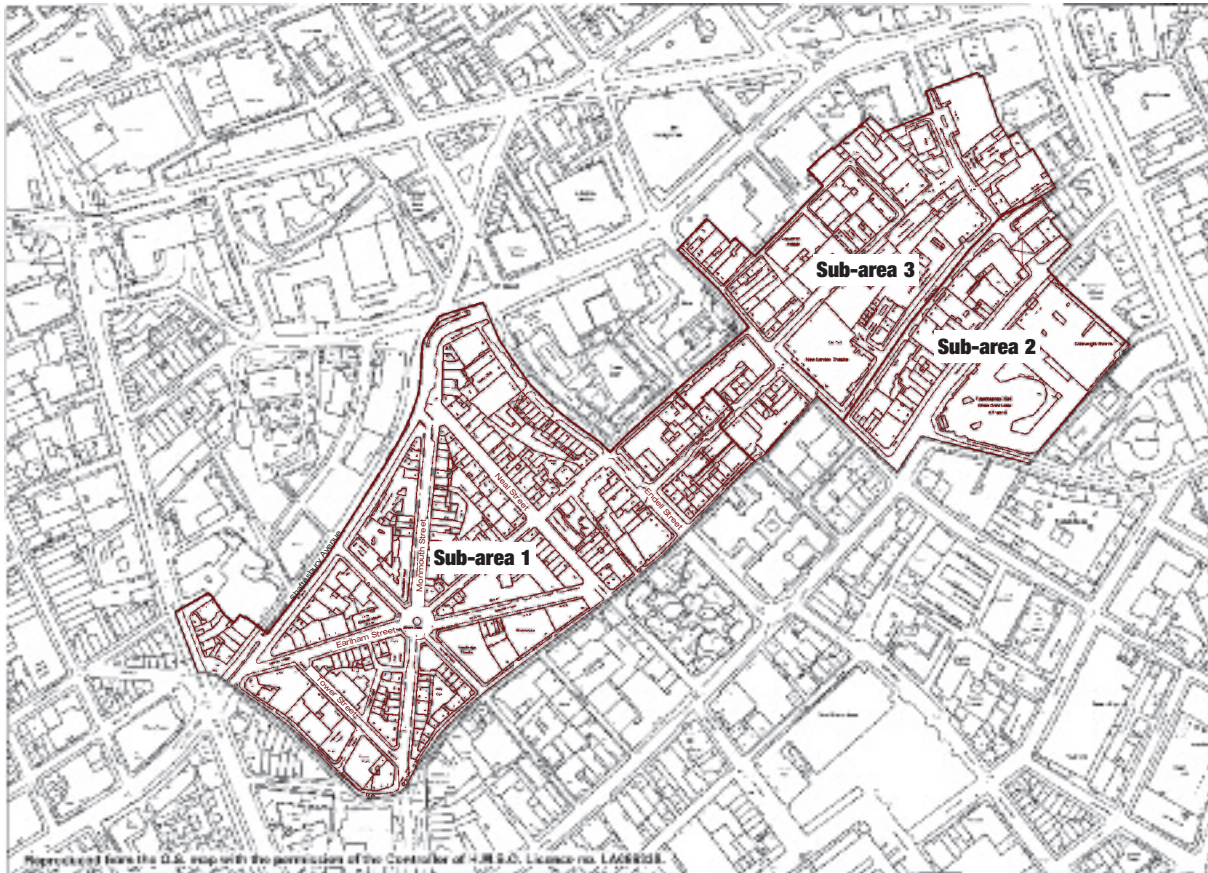


Urban Grain

Location

PLANNING HISTORY

Designation Date: 26.11.1971 and extended 24.07.74, 11.6.91, 2.7.98



Sub-Areas

The Greater London Council (GLC) was the statutory local planning authority for Covent Garden in the 1970s. The Initial Development Plan for Greater London was amended in 1973 to include the designation of Covent Garden as a Comprehensive Development Area to enable the GLC to deal with the consequences of the vacation of the market to Wandsworth. At the same time over 200 buildings were listed in the area and Seven Dials was given 'Outstanding Status' by the Secretary of State. The GLC prepared an Action Area Plan (CGAAP) as a broad basis for the future development of the area (1978) for a ten year period. The document covered both Camden and Westminster. Camden undertook a review of the CGAAP in 1988 that contained interim policies for the area.

The Seven Dials Monument Charity, a recognised local community group, produced the Seven Dials Renaissance Report in 1991, an environmental handbook which aims to improve the appreciation of the unique street plan and achieve a consistent standard of high quality design. The work was funded by the Department of National Heritage. The Council supported the initial report in principle in July 1991. Buildings in Seven Dials have been restored based on the guidance. The revised version was completed in August 1997. The Handbook is an important reference for development proposals in the area. This document was considered and supported in principle by the Development Control Sub-Committee in 1998. It was an award winner in the Environmental Design Awards 98.

The Council also supports local community initiatives and partnerships to promote and implement specific enhancement proposals in accordance with approved planning guidance.

For the purposes of this Statement the Conservation Area is separated into three sub areas; one centred on Seven Dials, the second incorporating the Freemasons Hall/Great Queen Street and the third an area in the north east of the Conservation Area around Macklin Street.

HISTORY



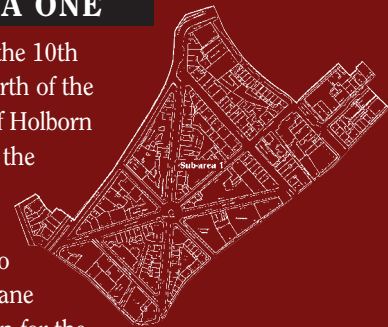
1770 painting

Archaeology The history of settlement in the area can be traced to Roman times when roads led from Londinium, located to the east, along Holborn/Oxford Street to the north and the Strand to the south. Cemeteries were established along these roads in the 1st century. The area bounded by Trafalgar Square to the west, the Strand and the Thames on the south, and Oxford Street-High Holborn on the north has been identified as the site of a Saxon trading settlement known as Lundenwic. Dated between the 7th and 9th century the settlement was over 60 hectares in size. Archaeological excavations since 1984 have revealed important evidence of the town. Lundenwic was abandoned at the end of the 9th century, probably because of its lack of defences, and the old Roman walled city of Londinium was re-occupied.

Covent Garden The urbanisation of the area developed after the establishment of Covent Garden in the 1630s. The Piazza was developed by the Earl of Bedford who realised the potential for speculative building and gained a licence from Charles I to build the square. The Piazza was designed by Inigo Jones to form a distinguished Italianate square. The area around the Piazza became increasingly attractive to developers during the 17th century to provide accommodation accessible to the Westminster area.

SUB AREA ONE

Seven Dials - By the 10th century the area north of the Strand and south of Holborn had become part of the Westminster Abbey estates. From the 11th century land to the west of Drury Lane was used as a garden for the Abbey while the area around the Seven Dials was owned by The Hospital of St Giles, a leper hospital founded in 1117. In 1537 the land was taken over by Henry VIII and let on a series of leases. The 1658 map shows St Giles Field prior to development.



1658 (Faithorne and Newcourt)



1792 (Horwood)

The distinct layout around the Seven Dials is the legacy of an ambitious building plan devised by Thomas Neale, a speculator and Master of the Mint, at the end of the 17th century. The plan was unique, the only one of the 17th and 18th century developments in the West End which departs from a grid plan. Instead a radiating plan of streets was formed around a small central polygonal circus with a Doric column at the centre surmounted by sundials. The column was removed in 1773 probably by order of the Paving Commissioners to rid the area of the undesirables who congregated around it. The column was

1658

1792



67 Monmouth Street in 1970s

later re-erected on Weybridge Green. A replica of the column was erected in 1989 by the Seven Dials Monument Charity and unveiled by Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands.

West Street and Tower Street on the western side of the Conservation Area were laid out in the early 17th century before the Thomas Neale plan, and had to be incorporated into the radiating street plan.

The Thomas Neale development created domestic terraced buildings, some of which have survived. Even where the original buildings have been demolished the plot width, depth and scale is still apparent. The large triangular blocks that radiate from the Seven Dials column remain a distinctive feature of the area despite 200 years of urban development. Thomas Neale imposed building agreements on the leases he granted which specified the materials and size of the houses to be built. In addition the Act for the rebuilding of the City of London, passed in 1667, had introduced comprehensive building regulations which began to influence the materials, heights and details of buildings. The houses were first occupied by merchants, gentlemen and better off tradesmen.

Compressed into the same streets is the commercial development of the 18th and 19th century, in particular the brewery industry dating from the early 18th century. The Woodyard Brewery was established in 1740 on a site between Long Acre and Shelton Street (now in the City of Westminster). Over the next century the brewery industry expanded and eventually filled the area between Long Acre and Shorts Gardens with large stock brick warehouse buildings linked by high level cast iron bridges causing the demolition of many of the original houses, for example on the south side of Shorts Gardens between Seven Dials and Neal Street. This altered the scale and



character of parts of the area, although the street layout stayed the same. The brewery industry has not functioned in the area for over 80 years, yet most of the brewery buildings have survived.



During the 19th century the character changed as the houses were divided into lodgings. Seven Dials

became notorious for its links with crime and corruption. Charles Dickens son Charles jnr (1834) wrote, *“Nowhere within the reach of the West End of London can such a glimpse of the life of the poorer classes be obtained as on a Saturday evening at the Dials”*.

Towards the end of the 19th century slum clearance and traffic management along the north west edge of Seven Dials by the Metropolitan Board of Works led to Shaftesbury Avenue being created in 1889 through the widening of the original Monmouth Street.

In the early 20th century there was a development of theatres around St Martin’s



1871



Ordnance Survey 1910

1871
1910

Lane with St Martins Theatre and Ambassador Theatre being built in West Street in 1913, designed by WRS Sprague. The Cambridge Theatre at Seven Dials was built in 1930 designed by Wimperis, Simpson and Guthrie, with the interior partly by Serge Chermayeff. The Donmar Warehouse is now located in the Thomas Neal development continuing the tradition.

Covent Garden Market During the 19th century Covent Garden's central market became London's main wholesale fruit & vegetable market. The market dominated the area until the 1970s with the majority of buildings in the surrounding area servicing it. Warehouses were used for storage, in Shelton Street, Neal Street, Earlham Street, and merchants occupied office space.

The character of the area changed dramatically following a decision by the Covent Garden Market Authority in 1965 that the market, the largest single activity in the area, would leave in 1973-4. Plans prepared by the GLC for the comprehensive redevelopment of the area were abandoned after intense public opposition, in favour of preserving the physical character and fabric, strengthening the economic character and vitality, and safeguarding the residential community and improving housing conditions. The future was guided by the Covent Garden Action Area Plan 1978 with the GLC itself responsible for developing many of the sites in the area with mixed use schemes.



Neals Yard in 1970s



Neal Street 1970s



Neal Street present

During the past 15 years the residential population has increased in line with the objectives of the Action Area Plan and today there is a substantial residential community in Camden's part of Covent Garden. The first objective of the GLC's Covent Garden Action Area Plan was to safeguard the existing residential community and provide for a substantial improvement in housing conditions and to double the residential population. As a

consequence of the strategy there are a number of new residential developments, which have helped to retain and reinforce the residential community, such as Mathews Yard, Earlham House, Comyn Ching, Seven Dials Court, Neal Street, Shelton Street, Drury Lane and Betterton Street.

SUB AREA TWO

Great Queen Street Great Queen Street was built in the first half of the 17th century begun by the speculator William Newton with the adjacent Lincoln's Inn Fields. Named after James I's Queen, Ann of Denmark it has its origins in a royal private way to James I's favourite residence in Hertfordshire. Great Queen Street

formed a continuation of the north side of Lincoln's Inn Fields until the construction of Kingsway opened in 1905.

The character and architecture of Great Queen Street was also shaped by the development of Freemason buildings. In 1774 the Moderns' Grand Lodge (founded in 1717) bought a house on the southern side of Great Queen Street where the original Temple was built in 1775, with the addition of the Freemason's Tavern in 1786. In 1815 two houses were acquired with the aid of Sir John Soane (£500), who later designed additional premises for the Masons that were completed in 1829. In 1863 a new building was erected with designs by S.P Cockerell, son of Professor C.R. Cockerell RA which was completed in 1866. This building became known as "The Connaught Rooms".



1873 Ordnance map

1873

The present Freemasons Hall, which is located at the junction of Wild Street and Great Queen Street, is the central headquarters of English freemasonry. Ashley & Newman completed the building in its present form in 1933.

SUB AREA THREE

Macklin Street Running north to south is Drury Lane, one of the oldest roads in Covent Garden possibly dating back to the Saxon settlement of Lundenwic. On older maps it is known as Via de Aldwych and was a major route from what is now Aldwych to Holborn. The name is taken from Sir William Drury who built a house at the southern end of the road during the reign of Elizabeth I. A White Hart Inn has stood at the corner of Drury Lane and High Holborn since the 15th century. The White Hart became the property of Henry VIII in 1537 when there were probably no buildings surrounding it. Substantial development did not occur until the middle of the 16th century continuing into the early 17th century. Stukeley Street (formerly Goldsmith Street, and before that Coal Yard) was laid out in about 1640. Macklin Street (formerly Lewknors Lane, and later Charles Street) and Parker Street were formed in the early 17th century on the site of Rose Field; pastureland attached to the Rose Inn with a western boundary on Drury Lane. Shelton Street was identified as St. Thomas Street in the Morgan map 1682, and as King Street in 1792. The street ran east of Drury Lane. Present day Shelton Street was named in 1937-38 and lies west of Drury Lane.



During the 19th century housing conditions seriously deteriorated around Macklin Street, as in other parts of central London. In 1886 the medical officer of health for St Giles recommended that the area around Macklin Street and Parker Street should be cleared as the houses were beyond repair and severely overcrowded. The 1884 Royal Commission into housing conditions made the link between health and overcrowded, insanitary living conditions. Clearance was seen as the solution to a very high death rate and the Metropolitan Board of Works agreed a clearance scheme in 1886, known as the Shelton Street Improvement Scheme. In practice the Board had no power to erect housing and when the land was cleared in 1889 it displaced everyone who had lived there.

The latter part of the 19th century saw dramatic changes in the role of local government. In 1889 the London County Council (LCC) was created and under the 1890 Housing of the Working Classes Act was given the duty to prepare schemes for the rearrangement and reconstruction of streets and houses within unhealthy areas. They also had the power to erect lodging houses and dwellings. The newly formed LCC *'saw that by the provision of a model lodging house, a great example would be set, and in 1890 it decided to erect the Parker Street lodging house on one of the sites cleared by the Board'*. (LCC. Housing of the Working Classes in London 1855-1912) The Shelton Street Scheme identified six sites for housing, one of which was reserved by the LCC for the men's lodging house. The remainder were offered for auction. As there was no interest in the sites on the private market the LCC took responsibility for building public housing on all the sites. These sites provided the first public housing in Camden and the first London County Council lodging house. The 1893 Building Regulations limited the height of this type of residential development to five storeys which together with the standards set by the 1890 Housing of the Working Classes Act determined the height and layout and budgets for the new developments.

The LCC created a design team called the 'Housing of the Working Classes Branch' who were responsible for the Boundary estate in Shoreditch, the Millbank estate in Westminster and many others. The team were influenced by the Arts and Craft movement led by William Morris and in particular by the architecture of Philip Webb. In the case of the sites at Macklin Street designs were invited from outside the in-house team. Gibon and Russell designed the Lodging House. All the other LCC buildings - Aldwych, Cotterell, Lindsey, Powis, Wimbledon, were designed by Roland Plumb, another 'outsider'.



LCC Building - Parker House

In 1893 the Parker Street Lodging House was completed for 345 people. In 1896 Aldwych, Cotterell and Lindsey (demolished in the 1960s), Powis and Wimbledon buildings were completed for 284 people. Twenty workshops were also provided. The scheme also widened Parker Street and Macklin Street.



Earlham Street



Earlham Street towards Tower Court



Earlham Street



Endell Street

Character

CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE AREA



The special character of the Conservation Area is found in the range and mix of building types and uses and the street layout. The character is not dominated by one particular period or style of building but rather it is their combination that is of special interest.

Most buildings appear to spring from the footway without physical front boundaries or basement areas. In this tightly contained streetscape, changes of road width, building form and land-use give dramatic character variation, narrow alleys and hidden yards provide unforeseen interest and the few open spaces provide relief and a chance to pause and take stock of one's surroundings. Apart from Seven Dials there are no formal open spaces but some significant informal spaces occur in the form of yards and street junctions.

Planting on the front of buildings was a traditional means of providing vegetation that is still popular and provides a welcome foil to the hard materials of this densely developed area.

SUB AREA ONE



Earlham Street is predominately four storey with the scale and plot sizes of the original Seven Dials although it was almost entirely rebuilt in the 1880s as part of the Woodyard Brewery. There is still evidence of the high level cast iron bridges, which connected the brewery buildings across the street. A few 18th and early 19th century terraced buildings remain, in particular the section on the south side Nos.14-26. The Cambridge Theatre, a 1930s building designed by Wimperis, Simpson and Guthrie with interiors by Serge Chermayeff, forms a corner building at Seven Dials.



The simple classical design provides an interesting contrast to the 18th and 19th century corner buildings whilst having some affinity with warehouse buildings. The Art Deco design was later echoed in Ibis House, designed by Terry Farrell, another corner building at the junction of Monmouth Street and Mercer Street. Between Shaftesbury Avenue and Seven Dials there are a number of new shopfronts on the north side on buildings previously in office use that have been converted successfully to retail and residential use. An exception to the distinctive quality of Seven Dials is Earlham House, a 1970s development designed by Richard Seifert. It has a particularly damaging impact at street level on Mercer Street at the entrance to the basement car park.

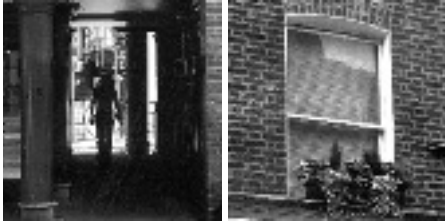


Between Seven Dials and Neal Street the streetscape is notable for the reinstatement of original paving materials plus Victorian gas lantern style streetlights and Seven Dials bollards as the first stage of the Renaissance project. Between Seven Dials and Shaftesbury Avenue a market, which has traded since at least the 19th century, occupies one side of the street.

Endell Street has an interesting architectural diversity, with many distinctive buildings. The street was constructed in its present form in 1846 as part of plans drawn up by Pennethorne (successor to Nash) for improvements to London. As a result it is wider than most Seven Dials streets with a number of mid Victorian medium scale commercial buildings: the former St Giles National School built in 1859 and designed by E.M. Barry - the words National School are still on the brickwork. This gothic revival building has polychrome brick and stone dressings; next to the Hostel are two buildings designed by George Vulliamy, No.81 (1854) Italianate four storey building with stucco frontage and rusticated quoins and No.79 (1854) the London Swiss Church, another Italianate building with a symmetrical facade of three bays in rusticated stucco. No.61 is a listed building that was in use as a timber yard for the last 100 years, in red brick with stucco dressings. A new housing development has been built at the rear of the building on



the site of the former yard that contained the timber shed. On the west side are good examples of late 18th century (altered mid-19th century) four storey and basement houses with a regular rhythm and plot width (Nos.51-59). These buildings are in stucco with first floor pedimented windows and a stone cornice at third floor level. The shops have wooden shopfronts with pilasters carrying a fascia entablature surmounted by dentil cornice. A mixed-use development proposal for St Paul's Hospital on the corner with Betterton Street has been agreed. (April 2000)



Monmouth Street runs north to south through Seven Dials. It retains some 17th century; Nos.14,16,18,21,27,61-63, and 18th century buildings; Nos.35,37,39, 42-50, 53-55, 57-59, 65-71. At the southern end is the Comyn Ching Triangle. The site was owned by Comyn Ching & Co (est.1723) an entirely British architectural ironmongers who retained a showroom at Nos.15-21 Shelton Street until July 1995. The 'triangle' which is bounded by Mercer Street, Shelton Street and Monmouth Street is a good example of the changing character and vitality of

Covent Garden. The 1980s development placed Terry Farrell designed corner buildings adjacent to restored Grade II listed 17th century buildings and created a mix of residential, retail and office use. The Shelton Street frontage has a particularly good restoration of 19th century shopfronts. A public courtyard was created at the centre of the triangle, an important urban space for the area. The scheme demonstrates how modern design can successfully integrate with the historic environment. The yard has a restrained, semi-formal air with crisp Yorkstone paving, wall top benches and ornamental trees in iron grilles. This contrasts strongly with Neal's Yard.



Neal Street Many of the properties retain the original 17th century plan form but had their facades re-constructed in the early 19th century and panelling replaced. Their narrow width give a character and rhythm to the street. The original terraced houses on Neal Street are four storeys and basement in yellow stock brick with red brick arches and date from the late 18th century to the early 19th century; Nos.27-37,61,64,78,80, are listed Grade II. During the 19th century shops were introduced at ground floor level and warehouses built. Many 19th century timber shopfronts can still be found along the street. Typically these shopfronts display classical proportions with pilasters supporting entablature and a projecting cornice. Generally shops have retained the single property width resulting in numerous small shops with a lively combination of shopfronts both modern and traditional.



The prevailing scale of the street is broken at the south eastern junction of Neal Street and Shorts Gardens by Nottingham House a neo-Georgian block of flats designed in 1925. The original five storey block and the rear

yard and mission hall were converted in 1997/8 into a mixed use development with shops at ground floor level, an additional floor of flats and a new mission hall. The development improved the street scene, particularly to Nottingham Court. Designed by the Peabody Design Group the scheme received a Civic Trust Award 2000.

At the rear of Neal Street, Shorts Gardens, Monmouth Street is Neal's Yard; a courtyard area that has developed into a wholefood and complementary medicine centre which also serves as a well used small public open space. At the junction of Neal Street, Earlham Street and Shelton Street the street widens to form a broad paved area in front of the Seven Dials Warehouse.

Shaftesbury Avenue and the north east corner of Cambridge Circus were formed by the Metropolitan Board of Works in the 1880s by widening the existing street. Shaftesbury Avenue then became an important central London Avenue, with a distinctive scale of buildings and use of materials, dominated by red brick and the use of terracotta.



Monmouth Street



Shelton Street



Neal Street



Nottingham House

Character



Shaftesbury Avenue

The street and the plot widths are generally wider than the rest of the Conservation Area and the buildings are generally higher. London Plane trees were planted to line the Avenue, which have become a distinctive feature of the street. Shaftesbury Avenue's character makes it a natural boundary to the Conservation Area, with three distinct spaces along its length. Cambridge Circus, though marred by the road layout and traffic is the grandest in terms of layout and scale. The Monmouth Street/Neal Street junction, with its widened footways forms a lesser and informal space. Outside the Conservation Area at the northern end is Princes Circus, currently a fragmented and traffic dominated space that contributes little to the area but its plane trees.

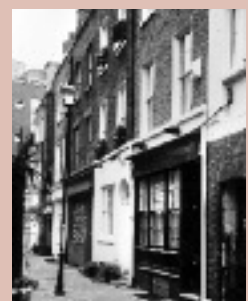
Shelton Street is dominated by the former Woodyard Brewery buildings which line both sides of this narrow street. Evidence of the high level linking iron bridges remain on some of the buildings. The historic remains of ironwork form part of the distinctive industrial character of this part of the Conservation Area. At the junction with Neal Street and Earlham Street is the Seven Dials Warehouse, which has iron hoists and hoist doors remaining. The building was converted to a mix of uses following a GLC permission in 1974, however a recent fire has destroyed much of the interior and proposals for it are expected (April 2000).



Short's Gardens has predominantly 19th century commercial buildings. The original buildings on the south side were demolished for the Brewery stables in the 1880s and the north side has mostly warehouses, four and five storeys high.

The triangle bounded by Short's Gardens, Earlham Street and Neal Street was converted in 1992 to a shopping development known as Thomas Neal's. Entrances to the shops are mostly located internally to maintain the appearance of the original warehouse ground floor windows. The whole block is listed Grade II.

Tower Court is a pleasant narrow pedestrianised street lying between Tower Street and Earlham Street, smaller in scale and height than the surrounding streets with a terrace of attractive late 18th century three storey houses. Grilles to their semi-basement windows form a distinctive part of the streetscape. The rear of the Two Brewers Public House forms part of the terrace with a contrasting glazed brick at ground floor level. An unusual element is that the west side of the street is formed by railings on a brick wall with the openness and greenery of a garden beyond. This is the rear of the Old Board School.



Tower Street is dominated by warehouse buildings and the old Board School (listed Grade II). The 19th century school is yellow stock brick with red brick and stone dressings and has been converted into offices. Nos.4-10 was built in 1878 and is a four storey brick building with rendered string courses and tripartite sash windows.

Townscape Forming the centre is the Seven Dials Pillar Sundial, seen from each entrance to the Dials. The character surrounding the column is derived from the street layout, the scale of buildings, plot sizes and the uses. Surrounding the circus at Seven Dials are seven distinctive corner buildings that terminate the radiating streets. From the column there are long vistas along narrow streets that are lined with tightly built terraces and warehouses. The close proximity of industrial buildings with domestic terraces creates the special quality of the Conservation Area.

There is an intimate atmosphere added to by the small incidental spaces found at junctions and in courtyards. This area includes many new developments which complement the historic architecture of Covent Garden; The Comyn Ching Triangle; the Thomas Neal conversion of warehouses at Shorts Garden/Earlham Street incorporates a complex of shops/cafes with offices and residential on the upper floors; Mathews Yard on Shorts Gardens is a mixed use development of residential, shops and workshops by the GLC, Nottingham House adapted into retail and residential. These are successful because of their design, in particular their scale, height and materials but in addition the uses are appropriate.



In an area of narrow streets open spaces provide unexpected and important contrasts and an opportunity to view the townscape. The most significant are; views towards and from Seven Dials; this included the view west along Earlham Street that frames the distinctive, red brick turreted corner of the Palace Theatre at Cambridge Circus and the view north along Mercer Street to the Post Office Tower. The views towards the open space at the northern end of Neal Street, the open space at the corner of Neal Street, Earlham Street and Shelton Street, views along Shaftesbury Avenue towards Cambridge Circus and Princes Circus, views into Neal's Yard.

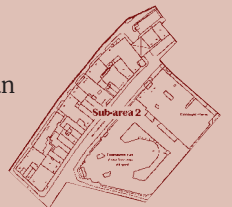
Negative features Not all recent development has enhanced the character and appearance of the area; such as Earlham House on Mercer Street/Shaftesbury Avenue/Earlham Street designed by Richard Seifert. Fielding Court at Seven Dials is also considered out of scale and unsympathetic in design to the character of the Conservation Area, in particular the materials and detailing.

SUB AREA TWO

Great Queen Street is located between two distinct areas and is influenced by both. To the east is Kingsway, an Edwardian development, which has higher buildings some with multi-dormered storeys. To the west is Covent



Garden with its generally lower and smaller scale buildings. There is a mix of offices, pubs, shops and restaurants. Great Queen Street has a number of listed buildings within it, including six early 18th century houses at Nos.27,28,29 and Nos.33,34,35 of three storeys, basement and dormers. All the houses have similar characteristics of red brick, heavy wooden eaves, cornices and pilaster orders rising from the first floor level to the cornice. The street has great importance in the development of street design. Sir John





Summerson in 'Georgian London' says that it 'put an end to gabled individualism, and provided a discipline for London's streets which was accepted for more than two hundred years'. In the 18th century it was known as the 'first regular street in London'. The front basement areas and railings are unusual in the Conservation Area.

The Freemasons Hall is a prominent steel frame construction faced with Portland stone. The Hall fits into an irregular polygonal site and was built as a memorial to Freemasons killed in World War I. It dominates the view eastwards along Long Acre and is widely considered to be an over development of the site by virtue of its scale and bulk in relation to its surroundings.



Townscape Great Queen Street is made distinct by the generous width of the western end of the street set out in 17th century. The street combines the domestic scale of the 17th century terraced buildings on the north side of the street and the later buildings by the Freemasons on the south side; the Freemasons Hall and the New Connaught Rooms.

Views Along Great Queen Street, from Kingsway and from Drury Lane.

Negative features At the junction with Newton Street is a 1960s office development, part 12 storeys and part six, which makes no positive contribution as it is out of scale and character. At the eastern end of Parker Street is another office block, Nos.43-49, with blue tinted glass which also fails to contribute to the Conservation Area.

SUB AREA THREE

Drury Lane Predominantly four storey terraced buildings, originally domestic, now with shops at ground floor level. There is a 1980s GLC mixed use development at the corner of Stukeley Street and Drury Lane of five storeys with residential, retail and workshops, which replaced an 1880s block. Some noteworthy 19th century buildings at Nos.181,182,183.

Macklin Street has an interesting variety of buildings. The street layout creates contrast, narrowing at St Joseph's RC Primary School to the width of the original street prior to realignment in the 1890s. The street is pedestrianised from Newton Street to Stukeley Street. At the western end is Wimbledon House, an LCC building designed

by Roland Plumb, two storeys with lancet and bulls eye windows, scrolled gables and high chimney stacks. The street then narrows at St Joseph's RC Primary School, a three storey building in two tone brick, with a brick apron under the windows and projecting keystones on the arches. The street widens at Powis Buildings, an LCC building designed by Rowland Plumb similar to Wimbledon House in style but four storeys. No.24 is the Mortuary, now converted to offices, a two storey mid-19th century building in red brick with stone dressings, cornice and strings in the Gothic style. No.23 is of historic interest, built in 1851 for Thomas Grieve and Son as painting rooms for theatrical scenery, they initiated the system of free lance painters working in their own premises rather than within theatres. It is a large three storey stucco-fronted building with central loading doors on the upper floors. No.17a is the St Giles Almshouses, a quadrangle of four almshouses founded in



Drury Lane





1665, first built on this site in 1790 and rebuilt in 1885 in a Jacobean style by Edward Henry Burnell. The almshouses are largely hidden from view from the street by a high brick wall.



Newton Street The Holland and Thurstan Dwellings are another example of Victorian philanthropic housing. Built in 1886 by the Central London Dwellings Improvement Company it is higher than most buildings of the period. Originally 6 storeys the buildings were restored and converted successfully in the 1980s, designed by CGHP Architects, and included an additional floor on top of Holland Dwellings which front Newton Street. The conversion received a Civic Trust Commendation in 1987. The northern end of the street has a residential block on the west side, built in the 1970s and a building recently converted to residential use from office use on the east. These buildings are not thought to make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. Neither does the 12 storey tower block at the corner of Newton and Parker Streets.

Parker St The western end is dominated by the New London Theatre. It replaced the Winter Garden Theatre on a site that has been a place of entertainment since Elizabethan times. Designed by Paul Tvrkovic in association with Sean Kenny it opened in 1973. On the corner with Macklin Street the unsympathetic use of concrete panels, for the private forecourt of the Theatre, harms the streetscape.

The rest of the north side of the street is largely occupied by two LCC buildings, Aldwych Buildings and Parker Street Lodging House, which give the street a cohesive quality. Aldwych Buildings is five storey with two tones of brick with moulded brick cornices, gables and curved mansards. Behind it lies Parker Mews and the yard of the Aldwych Buildings. On the north side of the yard is a row of workshops that formed part of the original LCC scheme. Parker Street Lodging House is four storeys in two tones of brick with two storey links at each end. Gibon and Russell were known for a mild-Baroque style which used many decorative devices but due to a stringent budget for the Lodging House their normally decorative style was reduced to one feature, a bracketed entrance hood.

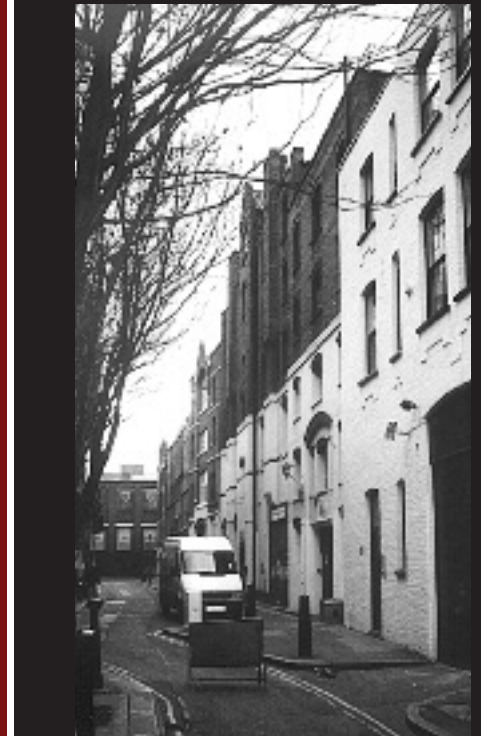


Parker Street

Stukeley Street A very narrow entrance at Drury Lane is an indication of the original street width. It widens at its centre because of redevelopment on the north side (not in the Conservation Area). The City Literary Institute building dominates the south side of the street, five storeys high with large glazed areas of metal windows. The building was designed by E.P.Wheeler and built in 1939. Pevsner says, *“The street has a commercial/industrial feel. Utilitarian, in the extremely narrow street in which it had to be built, but cheerful inside.”* On the south side of the street are examples of the narrow courts that date back to the 17th century, Smarts Place and a section of Stukeley Street, they have an industrial/commercial character, similar to a mews quality. The views into the courts contrast with air ventilation equipment marring Smarts Place. Between the City Lit building and Drury Lane are two storey buildings, with both residential and commercial use which add contrast and interest by their lower roof lines and cottage appearance. A recently completed housing scheme by CGHP Architects provides a vibrant contrast with extensive use of wood cladding at the eastern end of the street. Another housing scheme at 14 Stukeley Street received a Housing Design Award in 1999 and provides an excellent design for a narrow site.

Shorts Gardens/Betterton Street The block between Betterton Street and Shorts Gardens is occupied by a former LEB sub-station. The Betterton Street brick facade has ventilation holes with glass brick surrounds. The site is an opportunity site.

Stukeley Street



Macklin Street

Townscape The area offers a townscape with both variety and cohesiveness. Buildings from the 18th to the 20th century abut each other offering diversity and differing heights on the mainly narrow streets. On Macklin Street the change in the width of the street adds a punctuation point in the view, giving prominence to St Joseph's School. Taller buildings such as the New London Theatre and the Holland and Thurstan Buildings define the end of streets. This area has a predominance of Victorian municipal buildings, mainly built after slum clearances in 1889. This group of buildings created in one era is unified in terms of materials and design yet vary in scale, style and uses. There is contrast between the two storey almshouses on Macklin Street, the seven storey Holland and Thurstan Buildings on Newton Street, the two storey gothic style mortuary and the painting studios, both on Macklin Street.

Views Parker Street and Macklin Street, together with Stukeley Street provide long views, giving prominence to the facades and rooflines of the buildings emphasising the cohesive quality of the area. In contrast are the shorter dead end streets and yards with enclosed spaces.

Negative features The designation of the extension around Macklin Street in 1998 covered two sub-areas at the northern and southern ends of Newton Street that were included as opportunity sites rather than because of their positive contribution. The entrance, in Newton Street, to the service yard behind 199 to 206 High Holborn is particularly poor.

AUDIT

LISTED BUILDINGS

Those buildings currently on the statutory list of buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest include (all Grade II unless stated):

Betterton Street	24 (Grade II*), 33
Drury Lane	186,187
Earlham Street	29-43 odd, 14, 22, 24, 26, 36-40 even, Cambridge Theatre
Endell Street	31 Cross Keys P.H., 51-59 odd, 61, 63-69 odd, 79 London Swiss Church, 81, 83, 22
Great Queen Street	27-29 consec (Grade II*), 30 & 31, Freemasons Hall (Grade II*), 33-35 consec (Grade II*), 36 & 37, 38
Macklin Street	17a St Giles Almshouses, 23, 25
Mercer Street	21, 23, 25 & 27
Monmouth Street	21, 27, 35, 37, 39, 43 The Crown P.H., 53-59 odd, 61, 63-71 odd, 14-18even, 42-48 even
Neal Street	27, 29, 31, 33, 35, 37, 55, 61, 64, 78, 78a, 78b, 80
Shelton Street	11 & 13, 15-19 odd, 51 & 53
Shorts Gardens	1, 2, 4 & 6, 8-26 even
Tower Court	5-8 consec, 10
Tower Street	18 north & south wing, 22
West Street	St Martins Theatre, Ambassadors Theatre, 24

**There are
no properties
in the
English
Heritage
Register
of Buildings
at Risk
within the
Conservation
Area.**



Earlham Street



Earlham Street



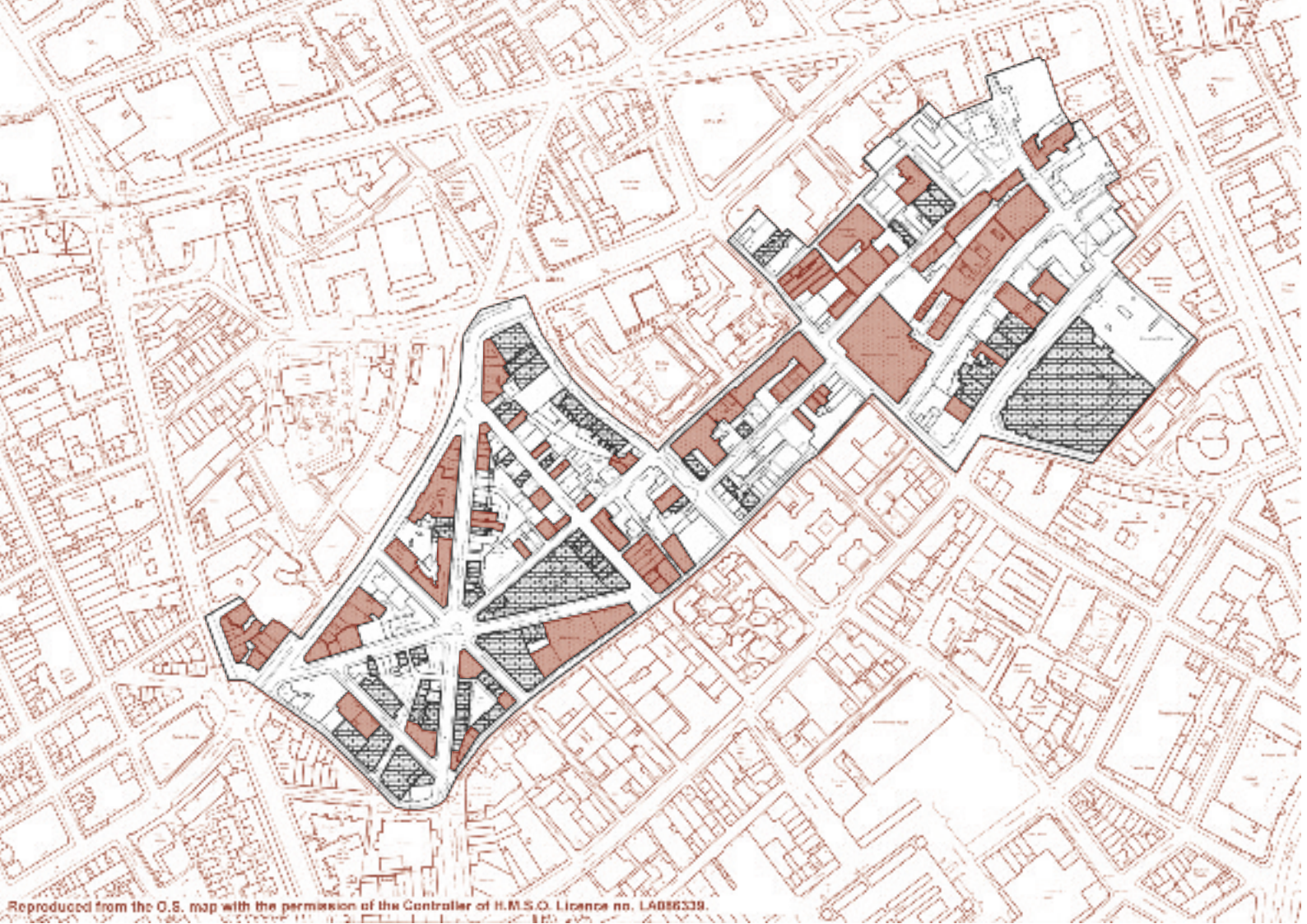
*29-39 Earlham Street,
2 Shorts Gardens*



*Freemasons Hall,
Great Queen St*



Endell Street



Positive and listed buildings



BUILDINGS WHICH MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION

A number of buildings are notable because of their value as local landmarks, or as particularly good examples of the local building tradition. Such buildings, whilst not statutorily listed are nevertheless important local buildings in their own right and make an important contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, and may be considered suitable for future statutory listing.

A list of such buildings will be maintained by the Council, and updated periodically. The buildings already identified by the Council as being of interest are as follows: -

Betterton Street	1, 3, 5, 9
Cambridge Circus	24
Caxton Walk	3-5 odd
Charing Cross Road	84a-94 even
Drury Lane	New London Theatre, 181, 182, 183
Earlham Street	1-5 odd
Endell Street	St Paul's Hospital, 33-35 odd, 71
Great Queen Street	consec:19-21, 24-26, 32, 39, 40
Macklin Street	Wimbledon House, St Joseph's RC School, Powis House,

Macklin House	1-7 odd, 9-11, 13, 15
Mercer Street	19
Monmouth Street	2-6 even, 8-12 French Hospital, The Mountbatten Hotel, 40, The Two Brewers PH, 50-52, 1-7 odd, 9-11 odd, 23, 25, 41, 51, 73
Neal Street	22 Crown & Anchor, 24, 26-32 even, Nottingham House, 48, 60, 68, 76, 39, 47, 63,
Newton Street	Holland and Thurstan Buildings
Parker Street	Aldwych Buildings, Aldwych Workshops, Parker Street House 25, 39-41
Shaftesbury Avenue	115-119 odd, 144-162 even, 166a Baptist Chapel, 190-204 even
Shelton Street	1-9 odd, 21, 25-33 odd (7 Dials Warehouse), 37, 39, 41
Shorts Gardens	15, 21, 41, 43, 45, 52-58, 62-72, LEB sub-station
Stukeley Street	4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, City Lit Institute, 20-22 even
Tower Court	9
Tower Street	4-10

SHOPFRONTS OF MERIT

Many shopfronts contribute to the character of the area and are of townscape merit. The following shopfronts have been identified, some for their historical interest, others as good examples of modern architecture: -

Drury Lane	24, 25, 178,179, 187
Earlham Street	5, 7, 9, 14, 18, 22, 24, 36, 38, 50 (Belgo Centraal)
Endell Street	51, 57, 69
Gt. Queen St	19-21, 22, 23, 33, 34, 36, 37, 38
Monmouth St	14, 16, 18, 42, 44, 48, 17, 9, 21, 23, 25, 27, 29, 31, 35, 41, 53, 55, 57, 59, 61-63, 65, 67, 69-71, 73, 75
Neal Street	26-28, 48, 50, 54, 58, 62, 64, 66, 76, 78-78a, 80-82, 29, 33, 35, 37, 39, 49, 63, 69
Shelton Street	1, 3, 7, 9, 11, 13, 17-19, 29b, 41
Short's Garden	1, 15, 17, 41, 43, 45, 4, 6, 8



STREETSCAPE AUDIT

The streets and public spaces of the Conservation Area make a significant contribution to its overall townscape quality. There are historic features, original materials and details that survive and sustain the distinctive appearance and character of Seven Dials.

Traditional materials and street features which enhance the Conservation Area.

Betterton Street	Some coal-hole covers remain. Original iron railings on north side. Wooden hatch to cellar and granite sett paving patch for unloading barrels to side of The Sun public house (No.21 Drury Lane).
Ching Court	York stone paving in courtyard.
Earlham Street	(7 Dials to Neal St) Granite sett carriageway, York stone footway.
Endell Street	Iron railings on east side between Shorts Gardens and Betterton Street. Wooden hatch to cellar and granite sett paving for unloading barrels to Cross Keys public house, No.31.

Shopfronts of merit



Monmouth Street



Monmouth Street



29 Shelton Street



Shorts Gardens



42 Monmouth Street



50 Neal Street



37a Neal Street



14 Earham Street



Great Queen Street	Some York stone footway and coal-hole covers at 19-34. Iron railings to Nos.27, 28 and to Puerorum House (No.26). Railings to the Connaught Rooms.
Macklin Street	York stone footway outside Powis House. Iron railings to boys' and girls' entrances of St Joseph's RC primary school.
Mercer Street	Granite sett carriageway.
Monmouth Street	Some coal-hole covers remain.
Neal Street	Some York stone at junction with Shelton St.
Neals Yard	Stone wheel deflectors/bollards; granite at corner with 19 Shorts Gardens, corner of No.1 Neals Yard and No.16 Neals Yard. York stone at corner of Nos.8-10 Neals Yard.
Parker Street	Iron railings to No.34.
Seven Dials	Footway of new, small York stone slabs forming outer ring.
Shaftesbury Avenue	Some coal-hole covers remain. Two K6 Phone boxes and double pillar box near junction with Neal street.
Shelton Street	York stone footway at 49-51 and from Nottingham Court to Neal Street. Coal-hole cover remains at 53.
Shorts Gardens	(7 Dials to Neal St) Granite sett carriageway, York stone footway.
Tower Court	Mostly York stone footway. Some coal-hole covers remain.
West Street	Some coal-hole covers remain.



New materials and street features which enhance the Conservation Area.

Macklin Street	Modern steel railings to Dragon Court.
Newton Street	Steel gateway to match new balconies at No.21-27 Holland and Thurstan Dwellings.
Stukeley Street	Steel gateway to Green Dragon House.
Seven Dials	Highway scheme surrounding the monument, including small York stone slabs, granite setts and block paving.
Tower Court	Traditional style railings on a brick wall to rear of the Old Board School at No.22 Tower Street.

OPPORTUNITY SITES

No vacant sites remain in the area, neither are there any sites in the Schedule of Land Use Proposals in the UDP. There are several sites that are considered to be opportunity sites. These are buildings which are considered to neither preserve nor enhance the character of the Conservation Area and therefore there may be scope for redevelopment, subject to an acceptable replacement. The following are considered as possible opportunity sites;

- Earlham House, Earlham Street/Mercer Street
- 1 Tower Street
- 41-45 Neal Street
- 10-16 Great Queen Street

Streetscape



Audit



CURRENT ISSUES

The area has retained much of its historic appearance even though the last twenty years has produced a considerable amount of development activity with the adaptation of industrial/warehouse buildings and terraced properties to modern commercial activities. The retail/restaurant industry is now dominant at ground floor level with a wide range of shops including designer clothes shops, particularly in and around Neal Street, traditional food stores, arts and crafts shops and many other specialist outlets. The upper floors have a mix of commercial (small businesses/media, etc.) and residential use. The area has transformed to a mixed use of retail/restaurant/residential/business with the addition of tourist related activities. It is this successful transition that creates the continuing development pressures particularly related to demands for entertainment, restaurant and retail uses. Many of the concerns within the Conservation Area relate to these activities and the adverse effects they have on the significant residential community.

Changes of use are the predominant reason for development pressure as they can lead to external alterations to buildings and a change in the character of the area. In addition incremental changes to the external appearance of buildings as well as largescale developments can erode the area's distinct qualities.

The main issues are;

Design and alterations to buildings A wide variety of design has been introduced in the last twenty years. Both modern and traditional designs have been used and the combination has mostly enhanced the character and appearance of the area. Most recent development has been designed to infill, however some has been more successful than others in enhancing the Conservation Area. Where new development is thought to have harmed the character or appearance of the area it has usually been caused by one or more of the following reasons:

- a. The use of inappropriate facing materials
- b. Excessive bulk, massing and height
- c. Signs erected on upper floors
- d. Signage of inappropriate size, proportions and materials
- e. Loss of original features
- f. Introduction of prominent air handling units/ducting
- g. Loss of significant views
- h. Development that does not respect the historic context.

Use The benefits of having a mix of residential and commercial activities has been widely acknowledged for maintaining the vitality of areas and safety at night. However, it is this combination of activities which can also create problems. A number of the pubs, bars and restaurants that have increased in the area have been the cause of complaints about increased noise and smells. Generally, this is caused by people leaving bars, noise and smells generated from ventilation equipment, refuse and late opening. Use can also affect the Conservation Area by the introduction of signs and tables and chairs on the pavements.

The Great Queen Street area has been less affected by the changes of the last twenty years that have altered Covent Garden so much. However its location at the edge of the Conservation Area does put it under pressure for tourist related uses, such as hotels.

Restaurants With the adoption of the UDP the Council has introduced policies for the Central Area which seek to protect residential amenity and retail uses. Applications for a change of use to Class A3 (food and drink) will be considered with particular regard to their impact on local residential amenity and retail uses.

Retail The increase in the number of retail uses has also had an impact on the character and appearance of the area. The amount of activity on the street has increased and with the development of music being played in the shops and extended opening hours there is now the additional issue of noise problems associated with retail use. This is particularly true of Neal Street.

Traffic Despite extensive environmental traffic management there remain various through routes in the Covent Garden Area. These are Monmouth Street (southbound), Endell Street (southbound), Shelton Street (westbound), Drury Lane (northbound), Endell Street-Betterton Street-Drury Lane (northbound) and Great Queen Street (mainly westbound). There is also much local traffic generated by day and night by the various types of business, retail and entertainment facilities in the area, which cause loss of amenity through congestion and pollution.

The Council is working in partnership with Westminster City Council to develop a traffic management / traffic reduction scheme for the Covent Garden area, including Seven Dials. The objective of this scheme is to remove unnecessary through traffic from the area while allowing access for service traffic. Any scheme would be dependent on further analysis, discussion with the police and City of Westminster and public consultation. Progression of any scheme would be through the Streets and Transport Sub-Committee.

The scheme is linked to the Council's Clear Zone initiative. Camden have joined with Westminster City Council and the Corporation of the City of London in a Sub-Regional partnership to pursue Clear Zone policies of reducing the impact of traffic, reducing vehicular emissions and providing efficient interfaces and information between different forms of traffic.

CrossRail The construction of a new east – west railway through London including an underground section from Liverpool Street to Paddington. Crossrail is currently safeguarded (refer to UDP Proposals Map), and this includes a significant portion of the Seven Dials (Covent Garden) Conservation Area. The scheme will be reviewed by the Greater London Authority and Mayor on whether to progress or not. If the scheme is to go ahead, it will need to obtain statutory powers through the Transport and Works Act 1992. Construction could begin towards the end of the decade, if there is a decision to proceed.

CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY REVIEW

The boundary of the Conservation Area was reviewed in 1998 and there are no further extensions to consider at the moment.

SEVEN DIALS GUIDELINES

Designation of a conservation area gives the Council greater power to control and manage change. It is not, however, intended to prevent all new development. Some development to single family dwellings does not require permission from the Council under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 such as small extensions and changes to windows not in the roof. This is known as permitted development. The majority of works within the Conservation Area will require planning permission, and/or conservation area consent, and it is therefore advisable to check with a planning officer whether permission is needed at an early stage of proposals.

Within conservation areas the Council has certain additional duties and powers in relation to the conservation of the built environment, and the UDP Environment Chapter sets out the Council's policies and general approach. In this context UDP Policy EN33 states *“the Council will seek to ensure that development in a conservation area preserves or enhances its special character and appearance and is designed to harmonise with the established character of the area. Applicants will be expected to provide sufficient information about the proposed development and its immediate setting which may include the preparation of montage studies, to enable the Council to assess the potential effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the conservation area.”*

A further guidance leaflet giving general advice on works and applications in conservation areas is available from this office, and additional guidance relating to specific problems within the Conservation Area may be produced from time-to-time for inclusion within this Statement.

NEW DEVELOPMENT

SD1 Proposals should be guided by the UDP in terms of the appropriate uses. New development should be seen as an opportunity to enhance the Conservation Area and should respect the built form and historic context of the area,

local views as well as existing features such as building lines, roof lines, elevational design, and where appropriate, architectural characteristics, detailing, profile, and materials of adjoining buildings. No vacant sites remain in the area, neither are there any sites in the Schedule of Land Use Proposals in the UDP. There are several sites that are considered to be opportunity sites. These are buildings which are considered to neither preserve nor enhance the character of the Conservation Area and therefore there may be scope for redevelopment, subject to an acceptable replacement. The following are considered as possible opportunity sites;

Earlham House, Earlham Street/Mercer Street
1 Tower Street, 41-45 Neal Street, 10-16 Great Queen Street

DESIGN

SD2 The Conservation Area has a long history of development which is demonstrated in the variety of styles which are juxtaposed within it. The last twenty years has seen the development of a successful combination of refurbishment and modern design, reflecting the dynamic changing character of the area, located in a unique historic context. Appropriate design for the Conservation Area can reflect both the historic and the modern context and both traditional and contemporary materials may be appropriate.

LISTED BUILDINGS

SD3 Under Section 7 of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, listed building consent is required for demolition of a listed building, and for any works of alteration or extension which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest. Even cleaning or repainting a facade may require listed building consent. The requirement for listed building consent is distinct from the need for planning permission and 'permitted development' rights do not apply to listed building consent.

SD4 Listed building consent is not normally required for maintenance and like for like repairs but, if repairs result in a significant loss of historic fabric or change to the appearance of the building, consent would be required.

SD5 It is an offence to carry out or ask for unauthorised works to be carried out to a listed building and the penalty can be severe – an unlimited fine or up to 12 months imprisonment, or both.

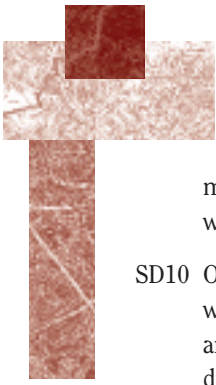
SD6 Advice on whether listed building consent is needed for works to listed buildings is available from the Conservation and Urban Design Team. You are advised to obtain written confirmation that repair work proposed does not require listed building consent. The Council's development policies relating to listed buildings are contained in the UDP. Additional guidance is included in Supplementary Planning Guidance and in the Government's Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 – Planning and the Historic Environment. A separate leaflet is available on listed buildings.

MATERIALS AND MAINTENANCE

SD7 In all cases, existing/original architectural features and detailing characteristic of the Conservation Area should be retained and kept in good repair, and only be replaced when there is no alternative, or to enhance the appearance of the building through the restoration of missing features. Original detailing such as door/window pediments and finials, timber shopfront facades, iron balustrades, timber framed sash windows, doors, where retained add to the visual interest of properties, and where removed in the past replacement with suitable copies will be encouraged. Original, traditional materials should be retained wherever possible and repaired if necessary.

SD8 The choice of materials in new work will be most important and will be the subject of control by the Council.

SD9 Generally routine and regular maintenance such as unblocking of gutters and rainwater pipes, the repair of damaged pointing, and the painting and repair of wood and metal work will prolong the life of a building and prevent unnecessary decay and damage. Where replacement is the only possible option, materials should be chosen to closely match the original. Generally the use of the original (or as similar as possible) natural



materials will be required, and the use of materials such as concrete roof tiles, artificial slate and PVCu windows would not be acceptable.

- SD10 Original brickwork should not be painted, rendered or clad unless this was the original treatment. Such new work, whilst seldom necessary, can have an unfortunate and undesirable effect on the appearance of the building and conservation area and may lead to long term structural and decorative damage, and may be extremely difficult (if not impossible) to reverse once completed. Re-pointing if done badly can also drastically alter the appearance of a building (especially when “fine gauge” brickwork is present), and may be difficult to reverse.
- SD11 Where replacement materials are to be used it is advisable to consult with the Council’s Conservation & Urban Design Team, to ensure appropriate choice and use.

DEMOLITION

- SD12 Within the Conservation Area total or substantial demolition of a building will require conservation area consent.
- SD13 The Council will seek the retention of those buildings which are considered to make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, and will only grant consent for demolition where it can be shown that the building detracts from the character of the area. Consent will not be granted for demolition unless a redevelopment scheme has been approved which will preserve or enhance the Conservation Area (see UDP Policy EN36 and SPG Demolition Guidelines).
- SD14 All applications should show clearly the extent of demolition works proposed (including partial demolition).
- SD15 The demolition of listed buildings will be resisted and the Council will seek to ensure that they are adequately maintained and in beneficial use.

CHANGE OF USE

- SD16 The Council recognises that there are commercial pressures for changes of use to restaurants/cafes and wine bars, and the associated problems that can occur with regard to residential amenity and the overall character of the area. There are also pressures for additional retail uses that can have a detrimental impact as well. Therefore, the Council will have regard to the above in determination of these applications and the effects on the overall retail function of the shopping streets, traffic conditions and the needs of the local community.

SHOPFRONTS/ADVERTISEMENTS

- SD17 The installation of a new shopfront and most alterations to the existing shopfront will need planning permission. The installation of external security shutters also requires planning permission. SPG contains more detailed advice on the design of shopfronts and signage.
- SD18 There are many historic shopfronts dating from the late 18th and 19th century and a number of well designed modern shopfronts. Proposals for new shopfronts will be expected to preserve or enhance the visual character and appearance of the shopping streets, through respect for the proportions, rhythm and form of the original frontages. Any shopfront of historic interest or architectural quality should be retained and if necessary repaired and the loss of those shopfronts identified under Shopfronts of Merit and any other historic/original shopfront will be strongly resisted. The restoration of wide shopfront entablatures will be welcomed as these can provide planting. Shopfronts that are considered to be out of character with the building or the area generally should be replaced with new shopfronts that are appropriate to the building and enhance the appearance of the Conservation Area.
- SD19 Similarly shop signage should be appropriate for the Conservation Area, respecting the proportions of the shop frontages, and maintaining the division between units and reflect the plot widths of buildings. Internally illuminated box signs are unacceptable and generally signage should be non-illuminated or externally

illuminated. Signage will usually consist of one fascia sign and one projecting sign. Shop signs should not normally be above ground floor level.

SHOPFRONT SECURITY

SD20 The introduction of security measures can detract from the appearance of the Conservation Area. The Council will prefer the use of security measures that do not require external shutters or grilles such as:

- a. the strengthening of shopfronts;
- b. the use of toughened or laminated glass;
- c. internal grilles or collapsible gates - these do not normally require planning permission unless they result in a material alteration to the external appearance of the shopfront;
- d. improved lighting.

SD21 There will be a general presumption against the use of external security shutters, grilles or mesh on shopfronts. Applicants would have to demonstrate that the above measures are not feasible for external security shutters, grilles or mesh to be considered. A separate leaflet is available on Shopfront Security.

SD22 It is Council policy to keep under continuous review the prioritisation of enforcement action across the Borough of unauthorised advertisement works and unauthorised change of use.

VENTILATION DUCTS/AIR HANDLING EQUIPMENT

SD23 The erection of all external ventilation ducts and air handling equipment will require planning permission from the Council. In assessing applications the Council will be concerned about the siting of the equipment, particularly in visually sensitive locations and in the proximity of residential accommodation, to ensure that local amenity is protected. (refer UDP: EN7).

SD24 The Council will require full details of mechanical plant and equipment for all A3 (change of use to restaurant) applications.


ROOF EXTENSIONS

SD25 Planning permission is required for alterations to the roof, at the front, rear and side, within the Conservation Area. There are limited opportunities for roof extensions as alterations to the roofscape could adversely affect the character of the Conservation Area. The following principles will apply:

- a. The retention or reinstatement of any architecturally interesting features and characteristic decorative elements such as parapets, cornices and chimney stacks and pots will be encouraged.
- b. Roof extensions should be drained to the rear of the building; no rainwater pipes will normally be allowed on the street elevation.
- c. All external works should be carried out in materials that match as closely as possible in colour, texture and type those of the original building or are common in the area.
- d. Where the property forms part of a proper terrace which remains largely, but not necessarily, completely unimpaired, an extension is likely to be unacceptable.

ROOF GARDENS

SD26 The formation of roof gardens can be an opportunity for external space. Due to the dense character of the area, the provision of roof gardens with extensive planting can provide visual amenity to neighbouring properties. However care should be given to locating gardens so that they do not have a detrimental impact on the street scene or on the architectural quality of the building. They can be successfully concealed, for example behind parapet walls. Consideration should be given to overlooking and the impact on long views in particular. Roof



gardens should not be located on mansard roofs. Window boxes above shop fronts were a 19th century feature in the area and are an additional way of providing a greener environment in an appropriate way.

REAR EXTENSIONS

SD27 The infilling of yards and rear spaces between buildings will generally be unacceptable.

SD28 What is permissible will depend on the original historic pattern of extensions within the terrace or group of buildings. Rear extensions will not be acceptable where they would spoil a uniform rear elevation of an unspoilt terrace or group of buildings.

BASEMENTS

SD29 The creation of new front basement areas will generally be resisted for traffic and design reasons. Excavation works can have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of a building and the Conservation Area. The Council will normally only permit such works if the building will be restored by the action to its original condition, or if it will contribute to the established character of the street scene.

ARCHAEOLOGY

SD30 This area has been identified by English Heritage Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service as the Suburbs of Roman Londinium, part of Saxon Lundenwic and an area of extensive medieval and post medieval settlement. The whole of the Conservation Area is within an Archaeological Priority Area and development proposals may have some impact on important remains. Therefore the Council will insist on an archaeological site evaluation where appropriate. Where excavation works are proposed it is important that the Council's Conservation & Urban Design Team and English Heritage are consulted to ensure adequate protection of such remains.

TREES AND LANDSCAPE DESIGN

SD31 Any person wishing to do works to a tree, such as pruning or felling, must give the Council six weeks notice of the works before it is carried out. If a tree is subject to a Tree Preservation Order the Council has eight weeks to process the application. Further advice is available from the Tree Officer on 020 7974 5616. The Council will consider the removal of existing trees only where necessary for safety or maintenance purposes or as part of a replanting/nature conservation programme.

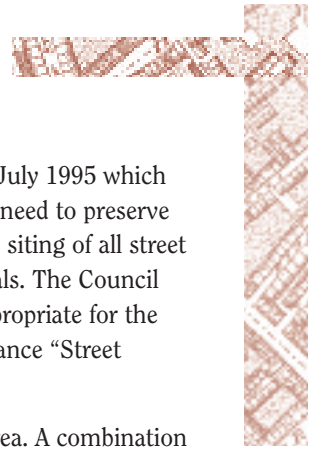
SD32 All trees which contribute to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area should be retained and protected. Developers will be expected to incorporate any new trees sensitively into the design of any development, and demonstrate that no trees will be lost or damaged before, during or after development. BS5837: 1991 shall be taken as the minimum required standard for protection of trees.

SD33 All new development should have a high standard of external space (landscape) design, which should respect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

SD34 Applications for development should take into account the possible impact on trees and other vegetation, and state clearly whether any damage/removal is likely and what protective measures are to be taken to ensure against damage during and after work.

TRAFFIC, PARKING AND THE PUBLIC REALM

SD35 Most streets in the area are heavily parked and there is unlikely to be any scope for additional off street parking (refer SPG). Scope for pedestrian improvements would normally be identified by the Council's Street Management Division.



SD36 The Council's Environment Committee agreed a policy for street maintenance/materials in July 1995 which seeks to maintain a high level of quality for the street environment. It is important that the need to preserve and enhance the historic character of the Conservation Area is recognised in the design and siting of all street furniture, including statutory undertakers and other services equipment and paving materials. The Council will make efforts to avoid any unnecessary visual clutter whilst seeking design solutions appropriate for the area in line with recommendations in PPG15 (paras 5.13 - 5.18) and English Heritage Guidance "Street Improvements in Historic Areas".

SD37 The streets have a variety of paving materials, often to the detriment of the Conservation Area. A combination of granite kerbs, granite setts ('cobblestones') and York stone slabs are the most acceptable surfaces but in some instances this is impractical. Where the carriageway has been raised to the same height as the footways the kerb-face is lost and bollards may be needed to protect footways and pedestrians from vehicles, (e.g. Neal Street). Even where the kerb-face remains it may be necessary to protect the footway from vehicle overrun.

SD38 In general the Council favours retention or replacement of traditional street features (kerb-faces, sett channels, basement grilles, historic bollards, historic-pattern streetlights) and materials and the minimisation of street furniture such as bollards and road signs.

See 'Seven Dials Renaissance – The Environmental Handbook' and Camden's 'Street Design Manual' for further information on street design.

SATELLITE DISHES

SD39 Dishes are not normally acceptable where they are positioned on the main facade of a building or in a prominent position visible from the street. The smallest practical size should be chosen with the dish kept to the rear of the property, below the ridge line and out of sight if at roof level. Planning permission may be required. Advice from the Conservation and Urban Design Team should be sought before undertaking such works.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The following is a list of useful material relating to the character and development of the Conservation Area.

A St Giles in the Fields, Survey of London Vol. V, Pt II (1914).

B John Richardson, Covent Garden (1979).

C Audrey Woodiwiss, The History of Covent Garden (1980).

D Peter Heath/ Dr J M Robinson, Seven Dials Renaissance.

E John Summerson, Georgian London (1945)

F LCC. Housing of the Working Classes in London 1855-1912

A list of useful further reading relating to historic buildings and their repair and maintenance has been compiled by the Conservation & Urban Design Team, and is available on request.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT

Conservation & Urban Design Team, London Borough of Camden, Environment Department, Town Hall Extension Argyle Street, London WC1H 8ND. Telephone: 020 7974 1944

USEFUL CONTACTS

Covent Garden Community Association, 21 Macklin Street, London WC2B 5NH.
Telephone: 020 7836 3355. Fax: 020 7404 2820. email: info@coventgarden.org.uk

Seven Dials Monument Charity, 68 Dean Street, London W1V 5HD
Telephone: 020 7437 5512. Fax: 020 7437 6612. email: db@sixty8.com

English Heritage, 23 Saville Row, London W1X 1AB. Telephone: 020 7973 3000. Fax: 020 7973 3001

ADDRESS LIST

NUMBERS

BETTERTON STREET	All
CAMBRIDGE CIRCUS	24
CAXTON WALK	3, 4, 5
CHARING CROSS ROAD	84, 84A, 90-94 (even), Trentishoe Mansions
DRURY LANE	157-161 (cons) New London Theatre, New London House, 167-172 (cons), 174-191 (cons)
EARLHAM STREET	All
ENDELL STREET	15-21, 27-43, 47-83 (odd) 14-22 (even)
GREAT QUEEN STREET	Freemason's Hall, Connaught Rooms, 8-44 (cons)
MACKLIN STREET	All
MATHEWS YARD	All
MERCER STREET	19-27(odd)
MONMOUTH STREET	All
NEAL STREET	22-32 (even), Nottingham House, 25-37a, 39-69 (odd)
NEAL'S YARD	All
NEWTON STREET	33, Holland and Thurston Dwellings, Wimbledon Buildings, 15-19 (odd), 12-14 (even)
NOTTINGHAM COURT	All
PARKER MEWS	All
PARKER STREET	2-48 (even), Aldwych Buildings, Parker Street House, 39,41
SHAFTESBURY AVENUE	144-204 (even), Gower Street Memorial Chapel, 115-119 (odd)
SHELTON STREET	1-21, 25-33, 37-75 (odd)
SHORTS GARDENS	1-47 (odd), 2-26, 34-42 (even)
SMART'S PLACE	All
STUKELEY STREET	2-14, 18-22 (even), City Literary Institute, Goldsmith Court
TOWER COURT	All
TOWER STREET	All
UPPER ST MARTIN'S LANE	
WEST STREET	2-38 (even)
WILD COURT	Rear of Freemason's Hall/Connaught Rooms
WILD STREET	Freemason's Hall





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Environment Department
Town Hall Extension
Argyle Street
London WC1H 8ND
Telephone: 020 7974 1944