

RL/P7336  
6<sup>th</sup> May 2020

London Borough of Camden  
2nd Floor, 5 Pancras Square  
c/o Town Hall, Judd Street  
London  
WC1H 9JE

Dear Sirs

**41-45 NEAL STREET, LONDON, WC2H 9QF**

**APPLICATION FOR A REPLACEMENT FLAT ROOF AT FIRST FLOOR LEVEL AND  
INSTALLATION OF 4NO. AIR CONDITIONING UNITS**

**PLANNING PORTAL REF. PP-08702241**

On behalf of our client, Shaftesbury Covent Garden Limited, we write in support of an application for planning permission to replace an existing flat roof at first floor level to the rear of 41-45 Neal Street and the installation of 4no air conditioning (AC) units. The proposed AC units will service the recently refurbished retail units at basement and ground floor.

In order to assist the Council in the determination of this application, the following documentation is enclosed and submitted electronically online via the Planning Portal:

- Application Form – *prepared by Rolfe Judd Planning*
- Site Location Plan – *prepared by Fresson & Tee*
- Proposed and Existing Drawings – *prepared by Fresson & Tee*
- Acoustic Report – *prepared by Hann Tucker*
- Existing Site Photographs – *prepared by Rolfe Judd Planning*

The requisite application fee of £462 has been paid online via the Council's website.

#### Site Description and Location

This application relates to the existing flat roof at first floor level to the rear of 41-45 Neal Street. The flat roof is currently in a poor state of repair and includes a modern glazed and metal frame roof lantern which is currently boarded over internally. The rear roof (or lightwell) is enclosed on three sides by the rear elevations of 39 Neal Street, 41-45 Neal Street, 21-23 Shorts Gardens and 16 Neal's Yard. The existing building comprises retail (Use Class A1) at basement and ground floor with office (Use Class B1) at first, second and third floor.

#### **Architecture Planning Interiors**

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The application site is not statutorily listed, however is located within the Seven Dials (Covent Garden) Conservation Area. The conservation area appraisal states that the building is identified as neither preserving nor enhancing the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, but instead has 'scope' for redevelopment, subject to an acceptable replacement.

The surrounding and adjoining premises are all commercial, however some residential accommodation is located at 21-23 Shorts Gardens (third floor) and 14-15 Neal's Yard (upper floors). These premises have been considered as part of the wider acoustic assessment which has been submitted alongside this application.

### Relevant Planning History

The building is currently undergoing refurbishment to provide new office (Class B1) and retail (Class A1) accommodation. It is noted that the following planning permissions have recently been granted in support of these refurbishment works:

- LPA Ref. 2019/2417/P
  - Alterations to roof to include installation of sunken plant area to include 3x air-conditioning units and installation of 3x air-conditioning units behind front parapet following removal of existing air-conditioning units to mixed use building (Use A1/B1a)
  - Granted: 18<sup>th</sup> July 2019
- LPA Ref. 2019/2068/P
  - Alterations to and replacement of existing windows on rear elevation with double glazed timber fittings.
  - Granted: 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2019
- 2019/1712/P
  - Installation of new shopfront (including minor increase of ground floor retail floorspace) and installation of replacement crittall-style windows on upper floors to front elevation of mixed-use retail/office building (use A1/B1a)
  - Granted: 21<sup>st</sup> May 2019

### The Application Proposal

As part of the overall improvement and refurbishment of the retail accommodation at 41-45 Neal Street, the applicant seeks to provide for new services which will meet the requirements of prospective tenants.

This will include the installation of 4no. AC units at first floor level to the rear of 41-45 Neal Street. The roof is currently in a poor condition and in need of replacement alongside a former modern roof lantern (currently boarded up internally). The existing roof will be replaced and provide for a safe platform for the new AC units to be located. The location is fully enclosed and not viewable from public vantage points.

The proposed plant equipment has been carefully chosen in consultation with environmental consultants Hann Tucker and M&E consultants Quinn Ross to ensure they meet the operational

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requirements of the building, whilst reducing the potential background noise levels as effectively as possible. Accordingly, a supporting acoustic assessment has been submitted with this application and is detailed further below.

Please refer to the existing and proposed drawings for further detailed information on the proposed location of the new plant and roof alterations.

#### Acoustic Assessment

An accompanying acoustic assessment has been prepared by environmental consultants Hann Tucker and is submitted as part of this application. The assessment has been completed to determine whether the plant noise emissions at the nearest noise sensitive window will be in accordance with the Council's local guidance. The assessment demonstrates that the proposed AC units will be capable of achieving the Council's specific acoustic criteria, as set out in Policy A1 (Managing the Impact of Development) and Appendix 3 of the Local Plan.

The assessment concludes that the proposed AC units will not result in any harm to the existing residential amenity, having regards to undue noise, nuisance or disturbance over and above what presently exists.

It is also noted that a number of historic and dormant plant equipment located within the lightwell will be removed. All new and retained plant will be identified and labelled by landlords Shaftesbury to ensure commercial tenants properly maintain and repair their plant (and allow for easy identification of those which may be broken or generating excess noise).

#### Design and Access Statement

The proposed design will include the replacement of the existing modern flat roof and glazed lantern with a modern waterproof ply membrane. The new roof will provide a safe and solid platform for the new AC units to be located, making them imperceptible from the surrounding street scene and conservation area.

The proposed AC units will not impact upon any access or escape routes from the building and will be accessed quarterly across the year for the purpose of maintenance and servicing.

#### Planning Policy Considerations

The proposed works are considered supportive of those local planning policies and supplementary planning guidance as outlined below.

Local Plan Policy D1 (Design) states that the Council will seek to secure high quality design in development which respects local character and context; preserves or enhances the historic environment and comprises details and materials that are of high quality.

Local Plan Policy D2 (Heritage) states that the Council will preserve and, where appropriate, enhance designated heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas and listed buildings.

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The Seven Dials (Covent Garden) Conservation Area Appraisal states that having regards to new development, proposals '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... In all cases, existing/original architectural features and detailing characteristic of the Conservation Area should be retained and kept in good repair.

The proposal includes the provision of 4no highly efficient air conditioning units located to the rear of 41-45 Neal Street. The plant will provide future heating and cooling to the newly refurbished retail units at basement and ground floor level.

The proposed plant equipment will be positioned towards the rear of the building, within an existing lightwell at first floor level. The proposed plant will therefore not be visible from any public views. The proposed location is considered to be supportive of Local Plan Policies D1 and D2 (detailed above) and Camden Planning Guidance (CPG) Design document. In addition to local plan policy, the CPG document states that building service equipment should, where possible, be incorporated within the development thereby ensuring minimal impact upon the surrounding built environment and wider conservation area and preventing undue harm to neighbouring amenity.

The proposed minor alterations to the rear first floor flat roof would not alter the existing appearance of the building and therefore not impact upon the building's character and appearance within the street scene or conservation area. The rear lightwell cannot be seen from the public realm and the new plant will not affect the amenity of any adjoining residential occupiers in terms of loss of natural light, outlook, enclosure or privacy. The proposal will therefore support Local Plan Policy A1 (Managing the Impact of Development).

#### Conclusion

The proposal seeks planning permission for the installation of new air conditioning units and associated works to the existing flat roof to the rear of 41-45 Neal Street. The proposed plant equipment will be fully enclosed and would not impact upon adjoining premises or the appearance of the surrounding conservation area. An acoustic report has been submitted with the application and confirms that collectively, the proposed air conditioning units will not impact upon the surrounding residential amenity.

We trust you will find the submitted information sufficient to validate our client's application and we look forward to a swift and positive outcome. However, should you require any further information or wish to arrange a site visit, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours faithfully

*Rupert Litherland*

For and on behalf of  
Rolfe Judd Planning Limited