

MR/P7597  
22<sup>nd</sup> December 2020

London Borough of Camden  
Regeneration and Planning  
5 Pancras Square  
London  
N1C 4AG

Dear Sir/Madam

**55 MONMOUTH STREET, LONDON, WC2H 9DG**

**APPLICATION FOR LISTED BUILDING CONSENT FOR THE INSTALLATION OF A NEW  
MAGNETIC LOCK TO THE GATE OF 55 MONMOUTH STREET**

**PLANNING PORTAL REF: PP-09369076**

On behalf of the applicant, Shaftesbury Covent Garden Limited, we write in support of an application for listed building consent for the installation of a new magnetic lock to the existing outer screen gates of 55 Monmouth Street.

In order to assist the Council in the determination of this application, we enclose the following documentation which has been submitted electronically online via the Planning Portal:

- Application Forms – *prepared by Rolfe Judd Planning*
- Site Location Plan – *prepared by Fresson & Tee*
- Proposed and Existing Drawings – *prepared by Fresson & Tee*
- Existing Photograph Schedule – *prepared by Rolfe Judd Planning*

The requisite application fee cheque of £234.00 has been paid online via the Council's website.

#### Site Description and Location

This application relates to the ground floor entrance of 55 Monmouth Street. The building's basement and ground floors are currently in retail use (Class E) with the upper floors recently benefitting from a change of use to residential use (Class C3). Access to both the ground and upper floors is currently provided via an outer screen metal gate from Monmouth Street.

The application site forms part of an extensive redevelopment scheme by architect Sir Terry Farrell during the 1970's and 1980's which was collectively known as Comyn Ching Court. This includes the triangular site with all buildings bounded by Shelton Street, Mercer Street and Monmouth Street.

The building is Grade II Listed and is located within the Seven Dials (Covent Garden) Conservation

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Area. Historic England provides a full and detailed description for the premises, however in summary, the description notes:

*“53-59 Monmouth Street, a terrace of C18 houses and C19 houses, restored and in part remodelled 1983-5 by the Terry Farrell Partnership as part of the regeneration of Comyn Ching Triangle, are listed at Grade II”.*

As part of the former redevelopment works (Terry Farrell Scheme), much of the original buildings were stripped back (or façades simply retained) and rebuilt using a traditional method with interjections of postmodern design. The outer gates are mentioned briefly within Historic England's description of the listing but are not given a detailed account.

Please refer to the submitted photographs for further details.

#### Relevant Planning History

As noted above, the premises formed part of an extensive redevelopment / refurbishment scheme during the late 1970's and onwards into the 1980's by the architect Sir Terry Farrell. Those redevelopment schemes are recognised as comprising of four separate proposals (some which are interlinked):

- 1977 Comyn Ching Scheme
- 1980 Comyn Ching Scheme
- 1980 Seven Dials Housing Co-operative Scheme
- 1981 Comyn Ching Scheme (planning permission ref. P14/58/A/31554/R1 and HB/2564/R1)

The final scheme, 1981 Comyn Ching Scheme, is recognised as being implemented and as built out – ‘the Terry Farrell scheme’ – and is referred to as part of the listed building description. As part of this implemented scheme, planning permission and historic building consent was granted on 4<sup>th</sup> November 1981 for the following works:

*“Rehabilitation of existing buildings (45-71 Monmouth Street, 19-31 Mercer Street, 1-21 Shelton Street) and construction of two new buildings to provide residential, retail and office uses”.*

The scheme was split into three phases, of which the application site 53-55 Monmouth Street formed part of Phase 1. This is confirmed as part of the Section 53 Agreement which noted that Phase 1 was to include the “retail and office rehabilitation of 53-63 Monmouth Street and the retail and residential rehabilitation of 11-19 Shelton Street”.

53-55 Monmouth Street itself has been subject to a number of recent applications:

- 2019/1646/P - *“Change of use of first, second and third floors from office (Class B1a) to residential to provide 2x 2bedroom maisonettes (in association with planning application ref: 2019/1294/P)”* – Granted 16<sup>th</sup> January 2020
- 2019/1710/L – *“Internal alterations to first, second and third floor level of building.”* – Granted 16<sup>th</sup> January 2020
- 2020/0406/P – *“Installation of non-opening external rear door at ground floor level”* – Granted 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020
- 2020/1248/L – *“Installation of non-opening external rear door at ground floor level”* –

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Granted 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020

- 2020/4257/A – “Display of 1 x non-illuminated projecting sign.” – Granted 7<sup>th</sup> October 2020
- 2020/4254/L – “Display of 1 x non-illuminated projecting sign.” – Granted 7<sup>th</sup> October 2020

As can be seen from the above, permission was granted in January 2020 for the change of use of the upper floors of the building from office (Class B1a) to residential (Class C3). Both the commercial use on the ground floor and the residential use of the upper floors are accessed from Monmouth Street (via the openable gate).

### The Application Proposal

The application proposal seeks the installation of a new magnetic lock to the outer screen metal gates for 55 Monmouth Street. The existing gate itself would remain unchanged, with a new armature bracket fixed to the top of each leaf. The brackets would magnetically attach to a new 80x40mm high metal channel that would sit above the existing gates.

The new metalwork would be painted to match the existing and would be constructed of similar material, seamlessly integrating into the existing exterior of the listed building. The magnetic lock would allow for improved safety of both the ground floor commercial and upper floor residential units by ensuring the gates are self-locking and cannot be left open. Residents would be able to open the gates remotely, rather than having to manually unlock the metal chain that currently keeps the gates secure at night. The new mechanism would allow for improved social distancing in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic by removing the requirement for residents to physically handle the gate.

The works are considered to be very minor in scale, with the installation of a small armature bracket and channel to the top of the existing gates and will provide a number of benefits to the occupiers of 55 Monmouth Street. The new metalwork will be designed to match the existing, with no other external works proposed. The proposal is considered to preserve the special architectural interest of the listed building and improve the safety of accessing the building for future residents.

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

### Planning Policy and Heritage Considerations

It is considered that the proposal is consistent with and supportive of those policies contained within the Local Plan for the reasons set out below.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Paragraph 190 states that local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence. In addition, they should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

NPPF Paragraph 192 states that the Council should, in determining applications, take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses. In addition, Paragraph 194 states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.

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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. Policy will seek to preserve or enhance the borough's listed buildings and resist proposals for alterations which would cause harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the building.

In accordance with local plan policy, the proposed alterations will preserve the designated heritage asset and would not cause harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the building. The proposal seeks minor alterations to the outer screen gates from Monmouth Street which integrate with the existing materials and therefore will not impact upon the established character or appearance of the listed building or the wider Seven Dials (Covent Garden) Conservation Area.

Conclusion

This application seeks listed building consent for the installation of a new magnetic locking system to the outer screen metal gate of 55 Monmouth Street. The new mechanism would improve the safety of both the residential and commercial occupiers and would integrate sympathetically with the existing metalwork. The works are minor in nature and will retain the special architectural and historic interest of the building.

We trust that you have all of the documentation required to validate the proposal, however should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours faithfully

*Mark Rattue*

For and on behalf of  
Rolfe Judd Planning Limited