

14 Monmouth Street,
London WC2H 9HB
Heritage Statement 2
London Borough of Camden
June 2021



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Heritage Statement
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Instruction

This additional Heritage Statement has been produced by Built Heritage Consultancy to accompany applications for planning permission and listed building consent by SohoHouse architects for a revised scheme for alterations to the roof of 14 Monmouth Street, London WC2H 9HB (the 'Site').

This Heritage Statement will proportionally assess the significance of the heritage asset and the potential impact of the works now proposed upon it.

1.2. The Site

The Site is a four storey terraced house which is listed Grade II and located in the Seven Dials Conservation Area. The ground floor and basement of the building are in retail use. A separate door provides access to the three upper floors which form one residential unit.

The building was added to the statutory list in 1972. The list description is as follows:

CAMDEN

*TQ3081SW MONMOUTH STREET 798-1/105/1132 (West side) 15/01/73 Nos.14, 16
AND 18
GV II*

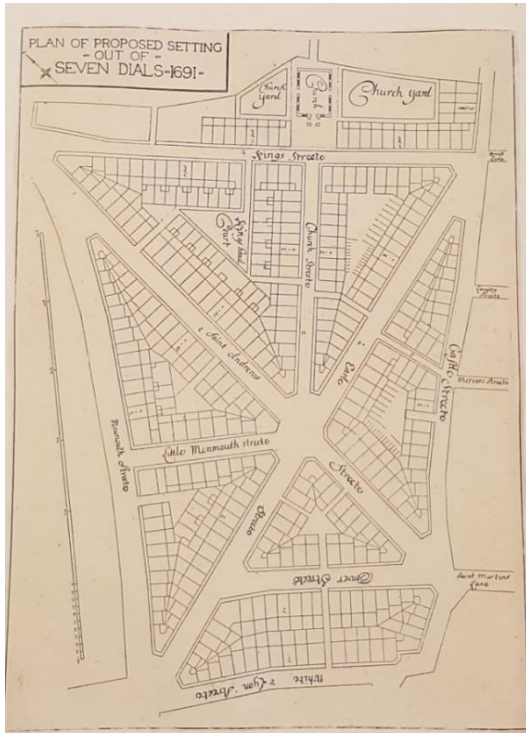
Row of 3 terraced houses with later shops. Late C17, altered C19. Multi-coloured stock brick with yellow patching. Brick band at 3rd floor level. Nos 16 & 18 with slate mansard roofs & dormers. 4 storeys, attics (to Nos 16 & 18) and cellars. 2 windows each. No.14 with mid C19 wooden shopfront with arched lights to shop window. Nos 16 & 18 with C20 reproductions of No.14. Gauged brick flat arches to recessed sash windows. Parapet. INTERIORS: not inspected.

1.3 Scheme Proposals

The proposals are for a revised scheme for alterations to the roof including the addition of a new skylight, removal of the existing staircase enclosure, addition of an air conditioning unit and alterations to the internal access up on to the existing roof terrace. Permission has previously been granted for similar alterations at roof level. (See application references in section 5.1 below.)

1.4 Map Regression

The following maps show the development of the area in which 14 Monmouth Street is located.

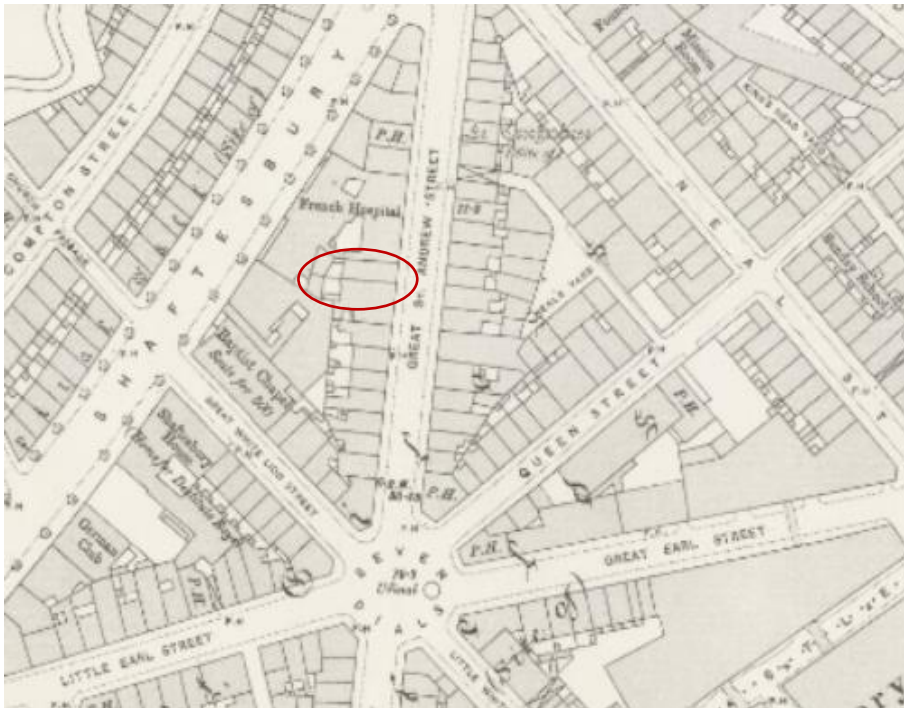


Map 1. Very early plan to show the setting out of Seven Dials in 1691. Monmouth Street was then known as Saint Andrew Street (Camden Local history archives). The area has an unusual radiating street pattern.



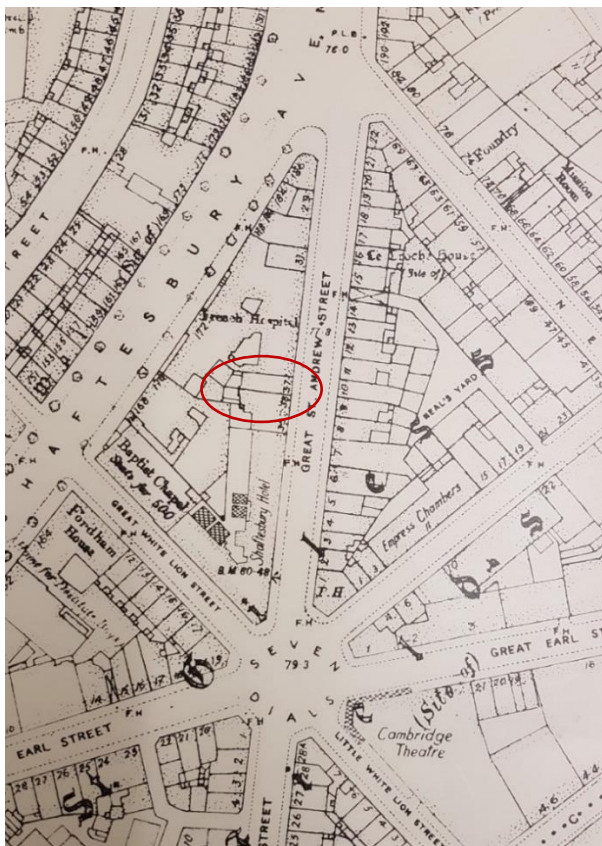
Map 2. Insurance Plan of London Vol. VIII: Sheet 194, November 1888. Goad.

(Note 14 Monmouth Street was previously known as 37 Great St Andrew Street)



Map 3. OS London 1:1,056 - Sheet VII.63

Publication date: 1895



Map 4. OS map from 1931 – 1932.

2.0 UNDERSTANDING

2.1 Identification of Heritage Assets to Assess

Paragraph 189 of the revised NPPF February 2019 states:

“In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary.”

2.2 Designated Heritage Assets

The Listed Building

No. 14 along with Nos. 16 and 18 form part of the late 17th century development of Seven Dials by Thomas Neale. They were begun in 1694 and later remodelled in the mid to late 18th century. The Site was previously known as No.37 Great St Andrew Street before the street names and numbering of Seven Dials were changed in 1937-8 and it changed to No. 14 Monmouth Street.

The building comprises a ground floor and three upper storeys. The original butterfly or ‘M shaped’ roof structure has been lost and replaced with a flat roof. The neighbouring properties Nos. 16 and 18 have mansard roofs, but these are not original having been added in the 1980s.

The “Seven Dials Renaissance Study Volume 1 1990 Supplementary report” describes the Site as follows:

“no 14 retains an unusual mid-17th century plan form, which was already somewhat old-fashioned by the 1690s, with the staircase centrally placed between the front and back rooms at right angles to the entrance passage, and dimly lit above by a narrow lightwell against the party wall. No.14 also has interesting mid eighteenth century joinery including part of a “Chinese Chippendale” stair balustrade, and timber dado and chimney pieces in the main rooms.”

Externally the building retains a historic shopfront and entrance door. The shopfront along with those on Nos. 16 and 18 were considered to be among the best in Seven Dials when the area was designated a conservation area.

The windows to the upper floors have been replaced with timber double glazed sash windows, although the windows they replaced appear themselves to have been later replacements (see photos 1, 2 and 6) as they were already recessed with hidden box sashes. The 1774 London Building Act required that the sash boxes should be covered externally by brickwork rather than the earlier style of exposed box sashes flush with the façade. The Seven Dials Renaissance Study suggests that many of the listed buildings were refaced in the 1790s.

There is clear evidence of rebuilding to the top storey of the frontage and at some stage a railing has been added along the roof parapet wall.

Internally the building retains its cellular plan form with a front and rear room separated by a staircase positioned centrally in the building. The staircase on each storey has two short flights linked by a winders and sits away from the party wall with No.16, creating an internal lightwell. [In other houses with the staircase in this location a corridor may have linked the back and front rooms.]

The staircase retains a closed string. The lower levels have turned stick balusters and from second floor upwards there are straight stick balusters. The 'Chinese Chippendale' section of balustrade which is referred to in the list description is no longer in existence and has been replaced with straight stick balusters to match the upper level of the staircase.

Exterior Photographs



Image 1. Front elevation of 14 Monmouth Street.



Image 2. Nos. 18, 16 and 14 Monmouth Street. These are the only remaining buildings from the original development of the area and retain their original plot widths.



Image 3. Upper storeys and roof line of nos. 18, 16 and 14 Monmouth Street.



Image 4. Roof level view towards the front elevation and Monmouth Street – original roof structure no longer exists.

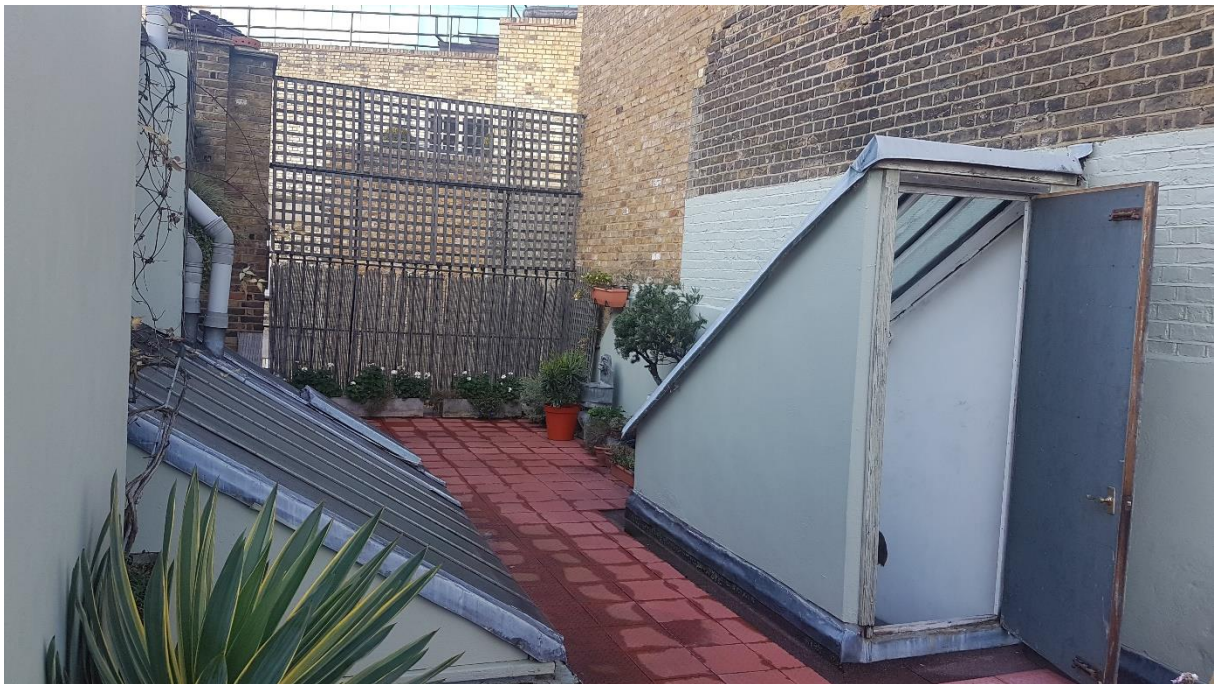


Image 5. Roof level view looking towards the rear of the property, showing the existing rooflight and staircase enclosure.



Image 6. Existing modern rooflight. The original roof structure no longer exists .



Image 7. Staircase compartment.



Image 8. Second to third floor flight. Old newel post; modern balustrade across the back of the winder stairs.



Image 9. View from second down to first floor. Historic newel post and possibly historic handrail.

Old photographs of the Site.



Photo 1. Monmouth Street photo March 1985 (Camden Local Archives centre)



Photo 2. Nos. 14 and 12 Monmouth Street 1974 (Collage – London Picture Archive)



Photo 3. Nos. 16, 14 and 12 Monmouth Street 1972 (Collage – London Picture Archive)



Photo 4. Rear elevation of 14 Monmouth Street 1972 (Collage – London Picture Archive). Note there is a modern window at third floor level.



Photo 5. Staircase with 'Chinese Chippendale' balustrade, 1972. (Collage – London Picture Archive) Compare with Image 8 above.

3.0 SIGNIFICANCE

3.1 The Listed Building

The building is of high overall significance as a surviving example of the 17th century development of the Seven Dials area. The west side of the street retains only 3 buildings with their original plot widths which were built to the design of Thomas Neale in his speculative development, and these survivors are therefore of high historic significance.

In terms of the exterior, the original roof has been lost and the modern flat roof is a negative feature; a staircase enclosure and a large glazed roof light take up a large amount of the roof area. Although the flat roof is not visible from the street the front parapet railings can be seen, and detract from the building's significance. The parapet has clearly been rebuilt in modern times, perhaps after war damage or when the flat roof was installed.

On the front elevation, the possible re-facing of the building in the 18th or 19th century, and the installation of later sash windows, have removed the original character of the main façade, however it still has a high degree of aesthetic and historical value as part of the old development of Seven Dials. The frontage also has a high group value with Nos. 16 and 18.

The rear elevation is more utilitarian but still retains historic brickwork and is of moderate significance. The third floor modern window detracts, however.

Internally the building retains much of its original historic plan form, with a central staircase standing away from the party wall.

The front rooms at first and second floor levels remain of high significance within the listed building, with many of their historic architectural features remaining. The third-floor front room is also of value, having a lesser moderate to high significance.

The rear rooms are more altered. The first floor kitchen detracts from the appearance of the room and some original features such as the chimneypiece are missing. The second floor rear room has had a bathroom added although its plan form is still discernible. The third floor rear room has been converted into a bathroom and an unfortunately positioned bath now blocks the chimney breast and where the chimneypiece would have been. The window in this room was replaced a long time ago with an inappropriately proportioned casement window. The rear rooms are therefore of lower significance.

The staircase appears to be in the original position but has been altered. A photo from 1972 as well as the Seven Dials Renaissance Study indicates that there was some 'Chinese Chippendale' balustrading along the lightwell area at least, but this is now gone. The staircase does retain some distinction between the lower floors and the upper floors of the building with the lower floors retaining a more decorative baluster compared to the straight stick balusters to the upper floor. Despite its alterations the staircase makes a strong contribution to the significance of the building.

3.2 Contribution the Site makes to the Significance of the Conservation Area

The Seven Dials Conservation Area is one of the most compact and distinctive pieces of townscape in the West End. Most London estate developments in the later 17th and 18th century were placed around a square as their principal feature. Seven Dials is unique having a radiating pattern of seven streets and a central polygonal space, which may have been influenced by Wren's unexecuted Baroque plan for rebuilding the City after the Great Fire (which contained several set-pieces of radiating streets).

The area was developed by Thomas Neale who laid out the streets to gain as much frontage as was possible. Many of the buildings still occupy their original 1690s building plots and retain at least some late 17th or early 18th century structure despite later refacing, remodelling and repairs. On the westside of Monmouth Street Nos. 14, 16 and 18 are the only three remaining buildings which retain their 17th century plot width and some fabric (though all have lost their original roofs, No. 14 is the only one with a detracting flat roof). Given the above, 14 Monmouth Street as well as its neighbours make a strongly positive contribution to the significance to the conservation area both individually and as a group value.

4.0 LEGISLATION AND POLICY

4.1 National Policy

The application principally raises design issues and previous proposals have been assessed against the following relevant policy and guidance.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), February 2019

The NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. At the heart of the NPPF is a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.

Section 12 of the NPPF attaches great importance to good design, which should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

Section 16 of the NPPF seeks to conserve and enhance the historic environment and should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance.

The following paragraphs are of relevance:

189. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

190. 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 and any necessary expertise. 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.

193. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any

potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance

196. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

4.2 Local Policy

Camden Local Plan 2017

The relevant policies are as follows:-

A1 - Managing the impact of development

D1 - Design

D2 - Heritage

Camden Planning Guidance

CPG1 - (Design)

Conservation Area Statement – Seven Dials (Covent Garden) adopted 1998

5.0 ASSESSMENT

5.1 Relevant Planning History

There have been various planning applications submitted for the property. The most recent and most relevant for these applications are as follows:

- **20/20/5419/L 14 Monmouth Street London WC2H 9HB**

Strengthening works to two timber beams in order to ensure structural stability of the property.

Listed building consent granted 12 December 2020

- **2020/1607/L and 2020/0623/P 14 Monmouth Street London WC2H 9HB**

Minor alterations to the plan to rear rooms on second and third floor, resulting in no loss of historic fabric, re-introduce timber wall panelling throughout, extend existing staircase to give access to the roof terrace, replace modern roof light with openable roof light, move railing at roof level to not be visible from street.

Listed building consent and planning permission granted 6 April 2020

5.2 Assessment of proposed works

Permission has already been granted for extension of the staircase upwards to give access onto the flat roof. The revised scheme would access the roof where the existing rooflight is located. The new double leaf low profile rooflight would be of a similar size to the existing pitched roof light but would be openable to allow access.

Access would be provided by extending the staircase with an additional flight above the existing staircase compartment, extending across to the party wall. The new flight would be constructed in a lightweight form to distinguish it from the original staircase below. This would be clearly discernible as a later / modern addition and would allow easier access to the roof terrace. There would be no loss of historic fabric other than a small section of balustrade on the third floor but this fabric is considered to make a minimal contribution to the overall significance of the listed building.

The provision of a new openable roof light in place of the existing pitched roof light would not result in any significant loss of historic fabric as the roof structure appears to be entirely modern. In addition, the new flat profile rooflight and removal of the unsightly existing staircase enclosure and pitched roof light will allow for a cleaner roof line and would remove roof level clutter.

The principle of the addition of air conditioning units to the roof has already been accepted. The revised location of the unit is in the middle section of the roof, adjacent to the party wall, where the existing access enclosure is located. It would be screened to avoid any visual or acoustic impact.

The associated internal alterations for the air conditioning are as previously approved.

The addition of an air conditioning unit and alterations and extension of the existing staircase are considered to have a neutral impact on the significance of the listed building. The previously approved restoration and refurbishment of the property, which has included the removal of inappropriate as well as unauthorised alterations, would enhance the listed building and wider conservation area.

The revised proposals therefore satisfy the relevant heritage legislation, national planning policies in the NPPF, and local planning policies.

6.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This report meets the requirements of the NPPF to assess the significance of the heritage asset in a proportionate manner and then to assess the impact of the proposals on this significance.

To summarise:

- The building is Grade II listed, one of the rare surviving 17th century (in origin) buildings, which forms part of the Seven Dials Conservation Area.
- Permission has previously been granted for alterations as well as restoration and refurbishment of the building as well as some enhancement works (Application references 2020/0623/P and 2020/5419/L.) These approved works offered some public benefit to this designated heritage asset.
- The addition of an air conditioning unit and the alteration and extension of the existing staircase formed part of this previously approved scheme. The revised proposals are for minor changes to the approved scheme ie. reducing the size of the roof light, extending the staircase and changing the position of the air conditioning unit. These works would have a neutral impact on the significance of the listed building and the conservation area. The removal of the modern roof level structure such as the staircase enclosure and existing roof light would offer some enhancement.
- The proposals therefore satisfy the relevant heritage legislation, national planning policies in the NPPF, and local planning policies.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Bibliography

The sources noted below have been used in the preparation of this report.

Greater London Authority, London Plan, as amended March 2016

Department for Communities & Local Government, National Planning Policy Framework, 2019

Historic England - *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance*, 2008

Historic England, *National Heritage List for England*

Historic England, *Good Practice Advice Note 2*, March 2015

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Google Maps

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Seven Dials Renaissance – The Environmental Handbook , How to look after an Historic Area 1990

Seven Dials Renaissance Study Volume 1, 1998

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John Summerson - *Georgian London* 1945

