

MR/P08480
1st June 2022

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

Dear Sir/Madam,

57-59 NEAL STREET, LONDON, WC2H 9PP

FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR EXTERIOR ALTERATIONS INCLUDING INSTALLATION OF NEW PLANT EQUIPMENT, ACOUSTIC ENCLOSURE AND LIFT OVERRUN AT ROOF LEVEL; VARIOUS ALTERATIONS TO FRONT AND REAR FENESTRATIONS INCLUDING REPLACEMENT WINDOWS AND A NEW TIMBER DOOR AT 57-59 NEAL STREET

PLANNING PORTAL REF. PP-11301178

On behalf of our client, Shaftesbury Covent Garden Limited, we write in support of a planning application for full planning permission for external alterations to the façade and roof level of 57-59 Neal Street ('the site').

In support of this application, the following documents and forms have been submitted electronically online via the Planning Portal:

- Planning Application Form – *prepared by Rolfe Judd Planning*
- Existing and Proposed Plans (including Site Location Plan) – *prepared by Fresson & Tee Architects*:
 - Basement and Ground Floor Plan Existing – *A-100-P1*
 - First and Second Floor Plan Existing – *A-101-P1*
 - Third and Fourth Floor Plan Existing – *A-102-P1*
 - Roof Plan Existing – *A-103-P1*
 - Basement and Ground Floor Plan Proposed – *A-200-P1*
 - First and Second Floor Plan Proposed – *A-201-P1*
 - Third and Fourth Floor Plan Proposed – *A-202-P1*
 - Roof Plan Proposed – *A-203-P1*
 - Existing Elevation Front and Rear – *A-300-P1*
 - Proposed Elevation Front and Rear – *A-400-P1*
- Site Location Plan - *prepared by Fresson & Tee*
 - *A-001-P1*
- Environmental Noise Assessment – prepared by Quinn Ross.

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It is confirmed that the requisite application fee of £426.00 has been paid electronically online via the Council's website.

Site Location and Description

The application site is located on the western side of Neal Street and comprises a traditional four storey warehouse building constructed from cream facing brick with red brick banding. The top floor appears to be a later addition, taking the form of a mansard roof. The existing shopfront at ground floor level is a later addition from the original building with fully glazed units and white plaster surrounds. A separate side entrance door provides access to the upper floors.

The property comprises a single retail unit (Class E, formerly Class A1) at basement, ground and first floor levels with office (Class E, formerly Class B1) on the second, third and fourth floor. This application seeks to introduce external changes to the building in association with internal refurbishment works to modernize the office accommodation on the upper floors.

The Seven Dials Renaissance Study (1998) describes the property, 57-59 Neal Street, as:

“A somewhat utilitarian late 19th Century building of white brick. The shop window openings are framed by piers and the framework of the modern shop fronts has been kept commendably simple. The bright red of the joinery in the upper windows is a good foil to the pale brickwork and helps enliven an otherwise featureless façade. This shows how a relatively plain building can be given an air of some distinction by well-chosen colours”.

The application site has a number of planning designations including the Central Activity Zone (CAZ) and the Seven Dials (Covent Garden) Conservation Area. The property is not statutorily listed but adjoins the listed building, 55 Neal Street. The surrounding area is typical of central London and the local shopping district of Seven Dials, with a mixture of town centre uses and residential / office uses at upper floor levels.

Relevant Planning History

The ground floor of the site has been subject to a number of planning permissions which are relevant in the determination of this application. This includes:

- 2020/5067/P – *Change of use of the 4th floor from office (Class E) to residential (Class C3); installation of new plant equipment and acoustic enclosure at roof level; various alterations to front and rear fenestrations including replacement windows, doors, balustrades and external lighting.* – Granted 22nd June 2021
- 2020/4409/P – *Installation of replacement shopfront and 2x non-illuminating projecting signs; erection of 2 storey rear extension to infill part of basement and ground floor lightwell; installation of new 1st floor rear window* – Granted 15th June 2021
- 2003/2181/P – *Retention of shopfront including ramp for disabled access and shutter at front entrance* – Granted 13th November 2003
- 2003/0782/P – *The installation of a shopfront* – Granted 1st August 2003
- PS9904408 – *Installation of roof top safety handrailing and related ancillary work* – Granted 17 June 1999
- 9500116 – *Installation of a new shopfront* – Granted 17th March 1995
- 9201021 – *The installation of a new shopfront* – Granted 12th November 1992

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As demonstrated above, the ground floor has undergone a number of alterations over recent years. This application relates to the upper floors of the building – most of the changes proposed have been granted permission previously in 2021 (reference 2020/5067/P) with the exception of a lift overrun at roof level and a new DDA compliant door on the ground floor.

The Application Proposal

This application seeks planning permission for minor external alterations to the building, including new timber windows that are appropriate in the Conservation Area, a new lift overrun and AC units at roof level. The condensing units and acoustic louvers have been consented previously in 2021 (reference 2020/5067/P) and have simply been adjusted to fit the new lift overrun. The overrun itself is required to facilitate DDA compliant access to the upper floors of the building.

The proposed changes are summarised below by floor for ease:

Ground Floor

- A new timber, DDA compliant office will be installed to allow access to the building;

First Floor

- New timber windows will be installed in the existing openings and will match existing details (consented under 2020/5067/P);
- New metal railings will be installed and painted to match the new windows (consented under 2020/5067/P);

Second Floor

- New timber windows will be installed in the existing openings and will match existing details (consented under 2020/5067/P);
- New metal railings will be installed and painted to match the new windows (consented under 2020/5067/P);

Third Floor

- New timber windows will be installed in the existing openings and will match existing details (consented under 2020/5067/P);
- New metal railings will be installed and painted to match the new windows (consented under 2020/5067/P);

Fourth Floor

- New timber windows will be installed in the existing openings and will match existing details (consented under 2020/5067/P)

Roof Level

- New timber roof lights will be installed into the existing openings (consented under 2020/5067/P);
- New timber windows will be installed in the existing openings and will match existing details (consented under 2020/5067/P)
- A new lift overrun will be installed to facilitate and internal lift to the upper floors. This will be DDA compliant and will be constructed from brick. The lift overrun structure will not be visible from ground floor level;
- The safety balustrade consented previously (2020/5067/P) is to be adapted to fit the new lift overrun structure;
- The acoustic louvers and condenser units consented previously (2020/5067/P) are to be adapted to fit the new lift overrun;
- A new roof access hatch will be installed (as per 2020/5067/P).

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To confirm, only the lift overrun structure and the new timber office door at ground floor level are 'new' changes – the other alterations proposed have all been consented previously in June 2021 (reference 2020/5067/P) but were not implemented.

For further details, please refer to the submitted drawings from Fresson & Tee Architects.

Planning Policy Considerations

The proposals seek to facilitate the external changes required in association with the modern refurbishment of the office accommodation, including a new DDA compliant door at ground floor level and a lift overrun required for a DDA compliant lift throughout the building. The external changes will also introduce new timber windows that are more appropriate in the context of the Conservation Area.

Camden Local Plan 2017

The site is within Seven Dials Conservation Area. Policy D2 (Heritage) of the Local Plan notes that the Council will not permit the loss of or substantial harm to a designated heritage asset (including conservation areas). The proposal involves very modest changes to the exterior of the building, largely consisting of the replacement of existing features. Most of the works were consented previously in June 2021 (reference 2020/5067/P) and as such the only 'new' alterations for consideration are the lift overrun at roof level and a new DDA compliant door at ground floor level. The lift overrun will not be visible from street level and the new door will be constructed from appropriate materials that do not detract from the appearance of character of the conservation area. These changes are therefore considered in accordance with Policy D2.

Policy E1 (Economic development) states the Council will secure a successful and inclusive economy in Camden. This will be achieved in part by maintaining a stock of premises suitable for a variety of business activities and by supporting proposals for the intensification of employment. The proposals facilitate the internal refurbishment works for the upper floors to bring the office floorspace in line with expectations of modern occupation. This includes alterations to allow for DDA compliant access to the ground and upper floors which the building currently does not offer. To confirm, there will be no loss of office floorspace as part of the proposals.

Policy A1 (Managing the impact of development) states that the Council will seek to protect the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours from (inter alia) the impact of noise and vibration levels. The previous application from 2020 (reference 2020/5067/P) included an Environmental Noise Assessment from Quin Ross which confirms that the proposed plant and acoustic enclosure meets the Council's requirements at the nearest noise sensitive property (68A Neal Street). For clarity, the equipment and enclosure is the same as that proposed previously and as such the proposals remain acceptable in this regard. The assessment from Quinn Ross is therefore re-submitted with this application.

Summary

This application seeks full planning permission for external alterations at 57-59 Neal Street in association with an office refurbishment across the first to fourth floors.

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The scheme will provide several exterior alterations and improvements to the building that are complementary to that of the host building and consistent with that which is already seen within the conservation area. Most changes have been approved previously in June 2021 (reference 2020/5067/P), except for a new lift overrun and DDA compliant door at ground floor level. These changes are not considered to be detrimental to the building or the wider Conservation Area and as such are compliant with local policy.

We trust that the enclosed information is sufficient for you to validate our client's planning application and we look forward to a swift and positive outcome. Should you require any further information and would like to arrange a site visit please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours faithfully

Mark Rattue

For and on behalf of
Rolfe Judd Planning Limited