

Minutes

Covent Garden Community Association

Planning Sub-Committee meeting held on Monday, 9 March 2015
at 17:00 at Covent Garden Community Centre (Shelton Room), 42 Earlham Street WC2H 9LA

www.CoventGarden.org.uk



TheCGCA



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1. Attendance

1.1 Apologies received: Selwyn Hardy, Richard Hills, Rhu Weir

1.2 Present: Elizabeth Bax, Jo Weir, Robert Bent, Shirely Gray, Gary Hayes, Meredith Whitten

2. Presentation: One Aldwych (hotel)

3. Planning Applications & Appeals

	Address & Application No.	Proposal	Comments
CAMDEN APPLICATIONS			
3.1	70 Kingsway WC2B 6AH 2015/1191/P & 2015/1192/L B1/Mishcon De Reya; TP Bennett (agent)	Installation of CCTV cameras, intercom system, new signage to rear entrance, replacement signage to front entrance; and replacement louvre at ground floor Twyford Place Facade.	No objection Photo: http://goo.gl/pr7DT0 Documents: http://goo.gl/4dGSGc Note: Listed building
3.2	70 Kingsway WC2B 6AH 2015/1153/P & 2015/1192/L B1/Mishcon De Reya; TP Bennett (agent)	Installation of new door and canopy at ground floor level on Gate Street (east) elevation.	While the CGCA has no objection to the proposals, we note that we prefer the door as currently approved, as we believe that the style and design of the door is a better fit with this grand, art-deco building. Photo: http://goo.gl/zbTqOd Documents: http://goo.gl/CTb32C Note: Listed building
3.3	66 Great Queen Street WC2B 5BX 2015/0670/P Kingsway Hall Hotel/Kingsway Hall Hotel; Dexter Moren Associates (agent)	Alterations to rear of existing hotel including reduction of first-floor level to match the footprint of the second floor, to repeat the existing facade treatment and fenestration pattern of floors above and to introduce a roof light over the existing restaurant.	No objection Photo: http://goo.gl/KvNE2W Documents: http://goo.gl/fuISfO
3.4	29 Neal Street London WC2H 9PR 2015/0508/P & 2015/0865/L A1 & C3/Shaftesbury; Rolfe Judd (agent)	Relocation of existing internal stairs, removal of existing mezzanine floor and minor internal walls at basement level with associated internal refurbishment works and replacement of existing shopfront with new timber shopfront with glazing and lead finishing.	The CGCA objects to the proposed shopfront, as the design is too modern and "sleek" (as the applicant describes it) and is not in keeping with the historic nature and character of the building, Neal Street or the conservation area. The applicant should be required to propose a more traditional shopfront, as required in the Seven Dials Renaissance Study, which Camden adopted for planning purposes. The study specifically references the shopfront of 29 Neal Street. (See p. 34-38 & p. 61.) The CGCA does not object to the internal alterations. Photo: http://goo.gl/OKc1oN Documents: http://goo.gl/h73wXx Note: Listed building

3.5	Kingsway 2015/0873/A Various/ <i>Bay Media Ltd.</i>	Display of 14 x lamp post banners in various locations along Kingsway.	Objection. The CGCA strongly objects to this application, which we consider wholly inappropriate at the gateway to the Covent Garden Conservation Area. The proposed banners would result in long-term visual clutter that is obtrusive, visually impairs the siteline on a major street surrounding the conservation area – which is particularly a hazard for the many bus and lorry drivers that use Kingsway – and changes the tone of the area by adding an unacceptable commercialisation. Kingsway is at a tipping point, as it is saturated with A-boards and advertising already. Photo: See documents Documents: http://goo.gl/HyZnDt
3.6	9-13 Grape Street WC2H 8ED 2015/0695/P B1/ <i>Project Met; DP9 Ltd.</i> (agent)	Erection of roof extension and change of use from office and photographic studios (B1), gymnasium (D2) and gallery (D1) to Class B1 at basement level and Class B1/A1 at ground floor level with 6 x residential units on part ground and upper floors (C3) and associated works.	No objection, provided the planning officer is convinced that the proposals will not have a negative impact on existing residents, and that any A1 use is aware of the canyon-like effect of noise and disturbance at this location. Any A1 use must include a limitation on hours because of the noise and disturbance impact on residential amenity. The CGCA also prefers B1 use at ground-floor level. We consistently object to permission for dual use, such as is proposed here, and we have previously provided Camden with legal advice to support our position that dual use is unlawful. Granting the applicant permission to potentially change use at some point in the future without the need to apply for planning permission or consult with neighbouring residents at that time effectively removes this premise from planning control. Photo: http://tiny.cc/e6tolx Documents: http://goo.gl/3l1guS Note: Previous applications on 08-09-14 & 30-12-13 agendas.
3.7	24 Betterton Street WC2H 9BU 2015/0594/L C3/ <i>Hill Mitchell Berry (agent)</i>	Proposed restoration of 24 Betterton Street. Repairs to be carried out to the external envelop of the building. Internal alterations of spaces and reinstatement of original features.	See comments below. Photo: http://goo.gl/c1UZBh Documents: None online Note: Listed building. Planning application withdrawn.
WESTMINSTER APPLICATIONS			
3.8	Royal Opera House 14/12407/FULL ROH/ <i>Royal Opera House Covent Garden Foundation; Gerald Eve (agent)</i>	Alterations to the Piazza entrance, construction of a glazed extension to Bow Street entrance with terrace above, partial glazing of the existing terrace beneath canopy at roof level to Piazza frontage, creation of a plant room adjacent the Floral Hall and associated works.	The CGCA has no objection to the proposed internal alterations, and supports the applicant's efforts to improve the Royal Opera House's viability as well as its role in the local community. In particular, we are pleased to see that proposals for the rooftop ballet studio have been omitted from this application, as the CGCA objected to the proposed studio's massing, height, visual impact and negative affect on the character of the conservation area.

			<p>The CGCA remains concerned about the loss of the trees on Bow Street. The proposals should be revised to incorporate more greening throughout the development.</p> <p>Finally, the applicant should ensure that the Royal Opera House continues to operate as an integral part of the community. While the proposals are meant to increase its viability, improve its visibility (particularly by enhancing the entrance from the Piazza) and provide more appropriate space, the Royal Opera House belongs to the local community. At times the swing doors are locked, meaning residents cannot pass through. The applicant should ensure that the building remains welcoming to all of the community.</p> <p>Photo: See documents</p> <p>Documents: http://goo.gl/UxP908</p> <p>Note: Listed building. Resubmitted application omits the rooftop ballet studio. Originally on 12-01-15 agenda.</p>
3.9	<p>Russell Street WC2B 5HH 15/00136/FULL Fortune Theatre/<i>Ambassador Theatre Group; Foster Wilson Architects (agent)</i></p>	<p>Removal of the existing haystack lantern and replacement with four new smoke vents within the same opening at roof level.</p>	<p>No objection. The CGCA welcomes this improvement to the Fortune Theatre, which is a valuable community asset.</p> <p>Photo: http://goo.gl/rsvKm</p> <p>Documents: http://goo.gl/vNlluE</p>
3.10	<p>2-4 Neal Street WC2H 9LY 14/11017/FULL <i>Itsu/Itsu Ltd.; Rolfe Judd Planning Limited (agent)</i></p>	<p>Installation of a new shopfront.</p>	<p>The CGCA strongly objects to the proposed shopfront, as it does not preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.</p> <p>Additionally, this location is highly unsuitable for restaurant/café/takeaway use, as it is directly below residential flats, as illustrated by the attached photo. The noise, disturbance, odours and inevitable rubbish left in this already congested, narrow pedestrian walkway will have a severe negative impact on the amenity of the residents at Odham's Walk. In particular, the large fast-food outlet will encourage noisy loitering directly under residents' windows.</p> <p>The applicant has other restaurants in Covent Garden and Central London that have tables and chairs on the public highway. It should be made clear to the applicant that such a use of the pavement at this location on Neal Street will not be allowed.</p> <p>Photos: http://goo.gl/8rcxJ & http://goo.gl/zCQ0g6</p> <p>Documents: http://goo.gl/zY72CO</p>
3.11	<p>Bedford Street London WC2E 9ED 15/01329/FULL <i>St. Pauls Church/The Parochial Church Council of St Paul's</i></p>	<p>Installation of new ramps and handrails to the existing main entrance of St Paul's Church.</p>	<p>No objection. The CGCA welcomes these improvements to St. Paul's Church, which is a valuable asset to the Covent Garden community.</p> <p>Photos: http://goo.gl/KzY89Y &</p>

	Church; Upchurch Associates (agent)		http://goo.gl/2iLx83 Documents: http://goo.gl/eb9C17 Note: Listed building
3.12	16 Henrietta Street WC2E 8QH 15/01333/FULL Formerly Covent Garden Grill/Capco; Gerald Eve (agent)	Installation of a replacement shopfront and associated external works.	No objection Photo: http://goo.gl/bUEwUI Documents: http://goo.gl/CEsNyY
3.13	5 King Street WC2E 8HN 15/00406/FULL B1/NASUWT; Norland Managed Services Ltd. (agent)	Installation of air conditioning units at rear lower ground floor level.	No objection, provided the planning officer is satisfied that the noise report accurately concludes that air-conditioning units will not have a negative impact on residential amenity, or any negative effect on the amenity of those using St. Paul's Churchyard, which is not directly referenced in the noise report. Any permission granted should require the applicant to have at least annual maintenance performed on all equipment, including ducting, to ensure it is running effectively and is not causing disturbance to nearby residents or exceeding 10 decibels below background. Finally, a condition should be included that restricts use of the air-conditioning units to normal business/office hours. The units should be turned off outside of these hours. Photos: http://goo.gl/oalbug , http://goo.gl/UrZelD & http://goo.gl/arNxGz Documents: http://goo.gl/CqBGlo

4. Tables and Chairs

CAMDEN APPLICATIONS			
4.1	42 Kingsway WC2B 6EX 2015/1179/TC Bill's/Bills Restaurants Limited; Pumphouse Designs (agent)	7 tables, 16 chairs and 9 barriers	The CGCA has no objection to the use of tables, chairs and barriers. However, we do object to the use of an A-board, which impedes pedestrian flow on this busy pavement. As an A-board is not included in the proposals, it should be clear to that the applicant does not have permission to use one. Photos: http://goo.gl/Oug4r0 & http://goo.gl/hQnh6G Documents: http://goo.gl/wZXa00 Note: Renewal. Change in use: previously four barriers. No change in hours: M-TH 08:00-23:00; F-SA 08:00-23:30; SU 08:00-22:30.
4.2	41-44 Great Queen Street WC2B 5AA 2015/1224/TC ITSU/ITSU Ltd.	4 tables, 24 chairs and 6 barriers	The CGCA strongly objects to the increase in the number of chairs at this location. As evident from the attached photo, three customers cannot realistically sit on one side of each table. The photo clearly shows that two customers take up all of the space. This means that customers will inevitably move the extra chairs to the end of the tables, which means they will back into the flow of the pavement and, thus, the applicant would be claiming a larger portion of this new clear zone for their private business. Allowing a greater

			<p>use of tables and chairs was not the reason that the pavement at this location was greatly widened.</p> <p>Great Queen Street has high pedestrian traffic, as residents, workers and visitors go between Kingsway and Holborn Station and the Piazza and Covent Garden station. This is why the pavement was greatly widened and a pedestrian clear zone established. The applicant, however, is claiming a large portion of this new clear zone for their private business, which was not the purpose of this public-realm and health-and-safety improvement.</p> <p>We note that the applicant is using an A-board, which the applicant has no permission for. Additionally, the applicant currently is using a server, clearly shown both on the drawings and the attached photos. However, the applicant does not have permission for this street furniture and, thus, it should be removed immediately.</p> <p>Photos: http://goo.gl/5FnjJ4, http://goo.gl/vG6pjO & http://goo.gl/l2XIQQ</p> <p>Documents: http://goo.gl/olm35t</p> <p>Note: Renewal. Change in use. Previously 16 chairs and 5 barriers. No change in hours: M-SU 09:00-20:00.</p>
WESTMINSTER APPLICATIONS			
4.3	417 Strand WC2R OPD 15/00490/TCH Port House/ <i>La Concha Ltd.</i> ; <i>Fladgate LLP (agent)</i>	Use of an area of the public highway measuring 4.02m x 2m for the placing of three benches, two tables and three plain barriers.	<p>The CGCA has no objection to the use of tables, benches and plain barriers. However, we do object to the use of an A-board and to the large barrel, which both are considered street furniture and which impede pedestrian flow on this constantly busy pavement. As the A-board and barrel are not included in the proposals, it should be clear to that the applicant does not have permission to use these.</p> <p>Photos: http://goo.gl/wdulmW & http://goo.gl/zzwieJ</p> <p>Documents: http://goo.gl/GlPbQJ</p> <p>Note: Renewal. No change in use or hours: M-SU 08:00-23:00.</p>

3.7 – Comments: The CGCA strongly objects to the proposed changes to this listed building in the Covent Garden Conservation Area.

First, the application has been validated without the supporting information required for such changes to a listed building. The application gives no indications as to the materials and methods that would be used to make the proposed changes. This information is required for any listed building application. Additionally, the only documents available are floor plans – there are no drawings specific to the proposed changes. The result is that the application is vague and misleading regarding the extent of the proposed changes. For example, the application vaguely discusses reinstating elements of the building, when in fact the proposals do not call for reinstating the original elements, but rather replacing the existing with modern copies of what would have existed.

Additionally, the CGCA is also concerned about the proposed new openings between rooms and blocking off of existing doorways and the removal of the existing fireplaces, which are clearly very old, with nothing to suggest they were added in modern times. The resizing of two rear windows, which along with the panelling are quite old. However, the applicant provides no details of neither what they will be replaced with nor details about the materials to be used. Knowing this is essential before a decision to grant permission can be made. Further, previous owners in the 1960s unearthed the very old alcove in the bathroom. Losing this would be a tragedy.

The CGCA objects to the following proposed changes, none of which are substantiated by the required documentation:

Ground floor

- According to the drawings, the applicant is proposing to install a new fireplace to the side of the existing chimney.
- The current door from the lobby to hall is being replaced with a non-original half-glazed, making this new door more modern than the door it is replacing (which although non-original, is older).

- The existing doorway would be blocked.
- The new shutters are not in keeping with the listed-building status.

Stairway

- The application proposes removing the existing cil and replacing it with new and existing panelling. However, the existing dates to pre-listing and is extremely old.

First floor

- In the dining room to TV room, the CGCA objects to the use of a non-original cupboard.
- The non-original fireplaces have been in place since at least the Victorian era.
- Proposed new openings into rooms and blocking of original doorways are not appropriate changes to this listed building.
- With previous listed-building applications for this site, the Council's Conservation and design department required that the fireplace was retained at the time of the last application to renew, so a unit was made to cover it (ref no: LSX0205284). The applicant's proposal to remove the old fireplace and replace it with new one is in violation of this.

Second floor

- The break-through to the bathroom, as well as the break-through from the new dressing room to the adjoining bedroom through an original wall is inappropriate in a listed building.
- The new doorway to the rear dressing room is inappropriate.
- The original doorway from the rear dressing room to landing would be blocked.
- The entrance to the bathroom via landing will be blocked by a new door.

Third floor

- The new doorway between new bedroom 3 to the dressing room will destroy an old alcove in this wall.
- The proposals would remove many of the features that existed at the time of listing and instead replace them with new, modern elements.

Drawings and details of the new proposed features (doors, fireplaces, panelling), including new secondary glazing, have not been supplied with the application, but must be provided for consultees such as the CGCA to examine, as well as for the Council's conservation officer to accurately advise planning officers.

The CGCA requests that these required documents be provided, and that the applicant provide assurance that they are indeed replacing for improvement of this Grade II* listed building. Until then, this application should be declared invalid and no decision should be made.

5. Other business

6. Next meetings & future presentations

- 6.1 23 March 2015
- 6.2 13 April 2015