

Minutes

Covent Garden Community Association

Planning Sub-Committee meeting held on Monday, 13 March 2017
at 6:30 p.m. at the Hospital Club, 24 Endell Street WC2H 9HQ

www.CoventGarden.org.uk  TheCGCA  @TheCGCA

1. Attendance

1.1 **Present:** Shirley Gray Amanda Rigby, Meredith Whitten

1.2 **Apologies received:** Elizabeth Bax, David Bieda, Jane French, Selwyn Hardy, Gary Hayes, Jo Weir, Rhu Weir

1.3 **Comments received:** Elizabeth Bax, Selwyn Hardy, Gary Hayes, Jo Weir, Rhu Weir

2. Presentations: None scheduled

3. Planning Applications & Appeals

	Address & Application No.	Proposal	Comments
CAMDEN APPLICATIONS			
3.1	101-103 New Oxford Street and 5-24 St Giles High Street WC1A 1DD 2017/0994/P Centre Point Tower, Centre Point Link and Centre Point House/ <i>Almacantar (Centre Point) Limited; Gerald Eve (agent)</i>	Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) of 2013/1957/P dated 01/04/2014, namely, changes to the configuration of the plant equipment at roof level at White Lion House including design development of attenuators; positioning of fans; changing of extract system and additional smoke extracts.	No objection, provided the officer is satisfied that the reconfigured equipment will not have a negative impact on views. Comments by 17-03-17 No photo Documents: https://goo.gl/lqcZqp
3.2	Holborn Tower 137-144 High Holborn WC1V 6PL 2017/0805/P <i>N/A/Vodafone Limited; Mono Consultants Ltd. (agent)</i>	Removal of 3 x antennas and installation of 9 x antennas, pole mounted on roof and 6 x RRUs affixed on free standing support frames and ancillary development thereto.	Whilst the CGCA does not object to these proposals, we would prefer for the equipment to be screened to minimise impact on views from neighbouring buildings. Comments by 21-03-17 Photo: See documents Documents: https://goo.gl/73tZCv
3.3	Land Adjacent to 75 Kingsway WC2B 6SR 2017/1095/P <i>N/A/Maximus Networks Ltd.; Metropolis Planning & Design (agent)</i>	Installation of 1 x telephone box.	The CGCA strongly objects to the installation of a public call box at this location in the conservation area. (1) Like other areas in Camden, Covent Garden has its own character and identity (CS9.1). The proposed telephone box fails to preserve or enhance the historic nature and unique character of the Seven Dials (Covent Garden) Conservation Area (CS5, CS9, CS14). According to DP24, careful consideration must be given to the characteristics of a development site, features of local distinctiveness, and the wider context in order to achieve high-quality development which integrates into its surroundings. Camden's planning policy is clear that the Council expects development to retain the distinctive characters of the conservation area and new development must contribute

			<p>positively to this. DP25 specifies that the Council “will only grant planning permission for development in Camden’s conservation areas that preserves and enhances the special character or appearance of the area.” Also see CPG1 2.6 and CPG1 2.9.</p> <p>(2) The proposed telephone box would result in visual street clutter that detracts from the character of the conservation area and that goes against Camden’s aim of reducing visual street clutter (see Streetscape Design Manual, Chapter 4). Such street clutter has a significantly adverse effect on the appearance of the streetscape and the amenity of the area. CS17.5 also specifies that the design of streets, public areas, and the spaces between buildings needs to be uncluttered.</p> <p>(3) The proposed telephone box would further continue to visual clutter as its primary function would be to serve as an advertising presence. CPG1 para 8.9 says advertisements in conservation areas and on or near listed buildings require detailed consideration given the sensitivity and historic nature of these areas or buildings. Any advertisements on or near a listed building or in a conservation area must not harm their character and appearance.</p> <p>(4) Further, the proposed public call box presents a safety hazard, as it obstructs the flow of pedestrian traffic, as well as wheelchairs and prams, at this location, which experiences high footfall.</p> <p>Whilst the applicant claims a need for public call boxes still exists, the research and data contradict the need for increasing the number of call boxes. According to Ofcom, the money that BT received from phone boxes went down by nearly half between 2000 and 2006. Further, Ofcom’s 2016 Communications Market Report found that 93 percent of UK adults own or use a mobile phone in the UK; 71 percent of adults own a smartphone. Research in 2013 also found that only 3 percent of UK residents made a call from a public phone box in the previous month.</p> <p>The evidence strongly supports that the number of public call boxes should be reduced, not increased.</p> <p>Comments by 27-03-17 Photo: See documents Documents: https://goo.gl/wRGraQ</p>
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WESTMINSTER APPLICATIONS			
3.4	98 Long Acre WC2E 9NR 17/01503/TELCOM	Installation of a public call box.	<p>The CGCA strongly objects to the installation of a public call box at this location in the conservation area.</p> <p>(1) Like other areas in Westminster, Covent Garden has its own character and identity based</p>

	<p><i>N/A/Maximus Networks Ltd.; Metropolis Planning & Design (agent)</i></p>		<p>largely on heritage (S25). The proposed public call box fails to maintain or improve (preserve or enhance) the character and appearance of the Covent Garden Conservation Area (S25, S28, DES9, para 10.108-10.128). According to S25, S28 and DES9, careful consideration must be given to the characteristics of a development site, features of local distinctiveness, and the wider context in order to achieve high-quality development which integrates into its surroundings. Westminster's planning policy is clear that the Council expects development to retain the distinctive characters of the conservation area and new development must contribute positively to this. S25 specifies that "the built environment must be respected and refurbished sensitively in a manner appropriate to its significance. Any change should not detract from the existing qualities of the environment."</p> <p>(2) The proposed public call box would result in visual street clutter that detracts from the character of the conservation area and that goes against Westminster's aim of reducing visual street clutter through a "less is more" and minimalist approach (see DES1-10.21; DES7-10.79; Westminster Way Public Realm Strategy, para 211). Street clutter has a significantly adverse effect on the appearance of the streetscape and the amenity of the area.</p> <p>(3) The proposed public call box would further continue to visual clutter as its primary function would be to serve as an advertising presence. DES8 specifies that all forms of temporary advertising, including on street furniture, will not be permitted.</p> <p>(4) Further, the proposed public call box presents a safety hazard, as it obstructs the flow of pedestrian traffic, as well as wheelchairs and prams, at this location, which experiences high footfall.</p> <p>Whilst the applicant claims a need for public call boxes still exists, the research and data contradict the need for increasing the number of call boxes. According to Ofcom, the money that BT received from phone boxes went down by nearly half between 2000 and 2006. Further, Ofcom's 2016 Communications Market Report found that 93 percent of UK adults own or use a mobile phone in the UK; 71 percent of adults own a smartphone. Research in 2013 also found that only 3 percent of UK residents made a call from a public phone box in the previous month.</p> <p>The evidence strongly supports that the number of public call boxes should be reduced, not increased.</p> <p>Comments by 27-03-17</p>
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3.5	90 Long Acre WC2E 9RA 17/01504/TELCOM	Installation of a public call box.	See 3.4 Comments by 27-03-17 Photo: See documents Documents: https://goo.gl/OdsYsX
3.6	Orion House 5 Upper St Martin's Lane WC2H 9EA 17/01501/TELCOM	Installation of a public call box.	See 3.4 Comments by 27-03-17 Photo: See documents Documents: https://goo.gl/iclFNS
3.7	405 Strand WC2R 0NE 17/01673/TELCOM	Installation of a public call box.	See 3.4 Comments by 03-04-17 Photo: See documents Documents: https://goo.gl/cXUiy2
3.8	82 Charing Cross Road WC2H 0BA 17/01502/TELCOM	Installation of a public call box.	See 3.4 Comments by 03-04-17 Photo: See documents Documents: https://goo.gl/hJEHdQ
3.9	15-17 Long Acre WC2E 9LH 17/01506/TELCOM	Installation of a public call box.	See 3.4 Comments by 03-04-17 Photo: See documents Documents: https://goo.gl/2LT8q7
3.10	1 King Street WC2E 8HN 17/01677/TELCOM	Installation of a public call box.	See 3.4 Comments by 03-04-17 Photo: See documents Documents: https://goo.gl/OxtwRr
3.11	1-4 King Street WC2E 8HN 17/00880/FULL Royal Opera House/ <i>Capco</i>	External and internal alterations associated with the division of Unit 5 of the Royal Opera House Arcade to create two separate retail units, involving the provision of a new shopfront entrance door. (Linked Case: 17/00881/LBC).	No objection Comments by 29-03-17 Photo: See D&A statement Documents: https://goo.gl/SVhuwg Note: Grade I listed building
3.12	28-32 St Martin's Court WC2N 4AL 17/01345/FULL <i>J. Sheekey/Caprice Holdings Ltd.; Bidwells (agent)</i>	Installation of 13 heaters to the shopfronts of 28-35 St Martin's Court.	The CGCA objects to the increase in visual clutter on the shopfronts. Additionally, given the oversized awnings in use, the use of heaters and their proposed locations tucked under the awnings would result in a fire hazard. As the attached photos illustrate, the applicant is overusing the public highway with the use of awnings, barriers and weather covering, not all of which are permitted. Whilst the barriers are permitted under 16/11480/TCH, the applicant does not have permission for weather covering, which creates a hemmed-in feeling and takes up half of St. Martin's Court, a busy court between St. Martin's Lane and Charing Cross Road. The Council has refused permission for tables and chairs elsewhere in St. Martin's Court because

			<p>they would block the flow of pedestrians and obstruct the ability to clean the pavement (see 13/09024/FULL & 13/01468/TCH). The applicant should be required to remove the weather covering and reduce the awning size before being permitted the use of heaters.</p> <p>Comments by 29-03-17</p> <p>Photo: https://goo.gl/DTcd0t</p> <p>Documents: https://goo.gl/HtVCh6</p> <p>Note: Retrospective application</p>
3.13	<p>Imperial House 15-19 Kingsway WC2B 6UN 17/01656/FULL A3 (ground) & B1/<i>Local Authorities Mutual Investment Trust c/o CCLA; Trehearne Architects (agent)</i></p>	<p>Removal of condition 8 of planning permission dated 10/01/2017 (16/10611/FULL), namely to allow the air conditioning plant to operate for longer hours than allowed for in condition 8.</p>	<p>The CGCA does not object to varying condition 8 to permit the air-conditioning plant to operate for longer hours, provided those hours do not extend beyond 21:00. This condition limiting the hours is needed to safeguard the of amenity of occupiers of noise sensitive properties and the area generally by ensuring that the plant/machinery does not cause undue noise and disturbance at hours when external background noise levels are quietest (see S32 of Westminster's City Plan adopted November 2016; and ENV 6 and ENV 7 of Westminster's Unitary Development Plan). The applicant should not be granted permission to run the equipment 24 hours per day as specified in the applicant's acoustic report. Precedent for limiting the hours air-conditioning units can operate is well-established by the Council in other planning decisions relating to Covent Garden. The close proximity of many residents, particularly on Kean Street was noted by the Council in including both condition 5 and 8.</p> <p>Comments by 30-03-17</p> <p>Photo: See documents</p> <p>Documents: https://goo.gl/nJtHXK</p> <p>Note: On 28-11-16 agenda.</p>
3.14	<p>119 Long Acre WC2E 9PB 17/01304/FULL <i>Levi's/Levi Strauss Ltd.; Silver Birch Design Ltd. (agent)</i></p>	<p>Removal of Condition 4 of planning permission dated 21-01-2017 (16/10745/FULL), namely to remove the requirements to provide detailed drawings of retention of the glazed brick tile to the piers to the ground floor elevation.</p>	<p>According to DES5(C), shopfront alterations should relate satisfactorily to the design of the rest of the building and should not displace locally distinctive or characteristic shopfronts ("Shopfronts, Blinds & Signs" SPG section 7). This is particularly critical in conservation areas (see DES5 10.116). Given that the brick tiles were added by the previous tenant, the CGCA would not object to the use of stucco, or render, in a muted tone, provided it is harmonious and sympathetic with the rest of the building as well as neighbouring buildings.</p> <p>Comments by 27-03-17</p> <p>Photo: https://goo.gl/OUcXJs</p> <p>Documents: https://goo.gl/SMCeYi</p> <p>Note: On 09-01-17 agenda.</p>
3.15	<p>27-29 Long Acre WC2E 9LA 17/01744/CLOPUD</p>	<p>Use of part of ground floor (47m2) of the shop as a cafe.</p>	<p>No objection, provided strongly worded conditions are included that clearly state that the applicant is not to incrementally increase the use</p>

	A1/RPS CgMs		<p>of the café.</p> <p>These conditions should specify that:</p> <p>(1) a full shop window display of retail goods for sale is provided;</p> <p>(2) the hours of the café are limited to no later than 21:00. Linking the café's hours to those of the shop is not sufficient, as extension of hours for a shop would have less impact than extending hours for a café;</p> <p>(3) cooking of raw or fresh food or preparation that requires special ventilation on the premises is expressly prohibited;</p> <p>(4) takeaway use is expressly prohibited;</p> <p>(5) deliveries of food and drink is limited to no later than 17:00; and</p> <p>(6) the café can be no more than 10 percent of the ground floor area.</p> <p>Comments by 04-04-17</p> <p>Photo: https://goo.gl/PZeiJ0 (Floral Street entrance)</p> <p>Documents: https://goo.gl/PCDXC3</p>
3.16	The Piazza 3 The Market WC2E 8RA 17/01769/LBC A1 (vacant)/Capco; Gerald Eve (agent)	Removal of the internal staircase, creation of a new staircase opening in the south-east corner of the unit, provision of a new staircase and associated internal alterations.	<p>No objection</p> <p>Comments by 03-04-17</p> <p>Photo: See D&A statement</p> <p>Documents: https://goo.gl/FxkyoF</p> <p>Note: Grade II* listed building</p>

4. Tables and Chairs

CAMDEN APPLICATIONS			
4.1	47 Endell Street WC2H 9AJ 2017/1235/TC Rock and Sole Plaice	7 picnic tables (42 seating), 4 heaters and 3 umbrellas	<p>The CGCA objects to the excessive number of tables and benches, heaters and umbrellas.</p> <p>There is a zebra crossing directly in front of the restaurant, but because the tables and benches go right to the edge of the pavement (see photo), pedestrians at the zebra crossing cannot be seen until they start to cross the road, resulting in a serious health and safety hazard. This renders the zebra crossing essentially useless. This junction has high vehicular traffic, making it quite dangerous for pedestrians. Also, note that the applicant is using more space than should be permitted, as the third umbrella is outside their shop.</p> <p>Because the picnic tables and benches extend to the edge of the pavement, pedestrians can only pass along the pavement between the picnic tables and the shop frontage. This space is already narrow and the constant presence of staff standing in the public highway to service customers at the street furniture contributes to creating an impediment to pedestrians' ability to safely pass.</p> <p>The applicant has moved the serving trolley and rubbish bins to a different location in the public highway, but continues to lack permission for this street furniture. As the attached photo shows, the serving trolley is nearly the same length as a table and bench. The applicant also is using a large A-board without permission.</p> <p>Finally, the hours do not comply with Camden's policy and planning guidance for tables and chairs, which states that hours for tables and chairs usage should not extend beyond 21:00. Endell Street is not a</p>

			<p>“predominantly commercial street in the Central London Area” as defined in the guidance and, thus, the hours must conform to Camden’s policy hours, which are Monday to Sunday, 08:00-21:00. Permission for hours beyond this violates Camden’s policy. Thus, allowing hours until 22:00 should not be permitted. To protect residential amenity from noise and disturbance (see CPG5 6.14), the hours of use for the T&CH should be limited to Camden’s core hours (end time of 21:00), as outlined in the Tables & Chairs policy (Statement of Licensing Policy, 2011). The CGCA notes that there are residents directly above and adjacent to this site, including those in Dudley Court. Residents have regularly complained about late-night noise from customers and from the applicant chaining up the umbrellas at night.</p> <p>Comments by 29-03-17</p> <p>Photo: https://goo.gl/DLb7YR</p> <p>Documents: https://goo.gl/gnRGRn</p> <p>Note: Renewal. No change in use or hours (M-SU: 11:00-22:30). On 25-04-16 agenda.</p>
4.2	<p>39 Endell Street WC2H 9BA 2017/1382/TC Verdelin/Verdelin Ltd. (agent)</p>	3 picnic benches (18 seats)	<p>Objection. The applicant’s drawing is highly misleading as it does not include the newly installed cycle racks directly in front of the premises. These cycle racks are in the exact location where the applicant proposes placing picnic tables and benches. See photos. The applicant’s drawing also shows cycle racks with no cycles in them. When cycles are in the racks, they take up considerable more space on the public highway, thus further limiting the amount of space available for pedestrians to safely pass and for the presence of street furniture, such as tables and chairs.</p> <p>Given this, there is no space on the public highway for any street furniture, particularly the excessive amount proposed, as this would result in less than the Council’s required minimum clearance of 1.8m.</p> <p>Comments by 05-04-17</p> <p>Photo: https://goo.gl/2dN8e1</p> <p>Documents: https://goo.gl/JL0eUB</p> <p>Note: New application. Proposed hours: M-SU 08:00-21:00.</p>
4.3	<p>114/116 Charing Cross Road WC2H 0JR 2017/1339/TC Chipotle Mexican Grill/Woods Whur 2014 Ltd.</p>	2 tables and 4 chairs	<p>The CGCA continues to question the applicant’s measurements. As the attached photo shows, Litchfield Street is a narrow passageway with a width that accommodates two people. No more than two tables and four chairs should be permitted and the street furniture must be configured as indicated on the proposed drawing. The tables and chairs should not be positioned side by side.</p> <p>Comments by 29-03-17</p> <p>Photo: https://goo.gl/5JYWFW</p> <p>Documents: https://goo.gl/hVZAvi</p> <p>Note: Renewal. No change in use or hours (M-TH 11:00-23:00; F-SA 11:00-23:30; SU 11:00-22:30). On 25-01-16 agenda.</p>
WESTMINSTER APPLICATIONS			
4.4	<p>38-40 Wellington Street WC2E 7BD 17/01603/TCH Boulevard Brasserie /Maxwell’s Restaurants Ltd.</p>	Use of three areas of the public highway measuring 3.32m x 1.2m, 1.35m x 1.35m and 3.58m x 0.97m for placing of 6 tables, 14 chairs and one planter.	<p>The CGCA continues to object to the excessive number of tables and chairs proposed. This represents a dramatic increase from the three tables and six chairs permitted at this location for years.</p> <p>We question the reason for widening the pavement at this location along Wellington Street as part of the Council’s public realm strategy if this simply results in pavement grabbing for street furniture and private business. The pavement was widened for pedestrian safety and accessibility, particularly given the incredibly high levels of</p>

			<p>footfall at this location near the Covent Garden Piazza. The Westminster Way and other Council policies are clear that a 2m clearance is a minimum, not a recommendation. Areas, such as this one, with high volumes of pedestrian and/or vehicular traffic, a wider clearance will be required.</p> <p>The increased number of tables and chairs create a significant obstacle in the pavement and interrupt the pedestrian movement on what is already a high - volume public highway. This is against Westminster policy (see Guidelines for the placing of tables and chairs on the highway," as well as "Westminster Way - Public realm strategy; Design principles and practice).</p> <p>In particular, the proposed table with four chairs will create an obstruction because two of the chairs back into the flow of footfall. According to Westminster's policy, tables and chairs create problems for pedestrians, particularly those with disabilities, because of obstruction of the public highway. This is particularly the case when chairs are placed in such a configuration that they back into the public highway, which reduces the clearance available for pedestrians, and particularly prams and wheelchairs, to safely pass.</p> <p>Additionally, the table with four chairs should be removed, as it blocks a doorway. Whilst the applicant says the door is locked shut, for health and safety reasons, there should be no obstructions in front of the doorway.</p> <p>Finally, no hours were proposed. No extension of hours should be permitted (currently M-SU 09:00-23:00).</p> <p>Comments by 30-03-17 Photo: https://goo.gl/ztOLcl Documents: https://goo.gl/yIQjGR Note: Renewal. No change in use. No hours proposed (current hours: M-SU 09:00-23:00). On 27-06-16 agenda.</p>
4.5	<p>45 St Martin's Lane WC2N 4EJ 17/01931/FULL St. Martin's Lane Hotel/St. Martin's Lane Hotel; Bidwells (agent)</p>	<p>Use of the public highway for the placing of 24 tables, 49 chairs and planters placed in an area measuring 3.25m x 39m in Mays Court.</p>	<p>No objection, provided no change in hours (currently Monday-Sunday 11:00-23:00). Also, a condition or informative should specify that the tables and chairs must be placed in the area on the approved drawing and should not be moved toward Befordbury, where there are many residents.</p> <p>Comments by 06-04-17 Photo: http://goo.gl/HACfg2 Documents: https://goo.gl/tuU61U Note: Renewal. No change in use. No proposed hours listed. Current hours: M-SU11:00-23:00. On 09-02-15 agenda. CGCA had no objection.</p>

5. Other business

Amanda Rigby discussed the misleading measurements used to indicate cycle racks on the public highway. Drawings typically show the racks without any cycles. However, the presence of cycles in the racks greatly increases the amount of space they take up on the pavement, thus limiting the amount of space available for pedestrians and for the presence of street furniture. The CGCA should refer to this when appropriate in comments on planning proposals. This issue should also be flagged for officers.

6. Next meetings & future presentations

- 6.1 27 March 2017
- 6.2 10 April 2017