



# From Demolition to Conservation 1971-1984

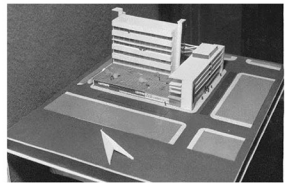
## THE GREATER LONDON COUNCIL, CAMDEN AND WESTMINSTER COUNCILS' PLANS

For many years, until finally defeated, there were plans to demolish much of Covent Garden and most of Seven Dials. *Seven Dials was regarded as 'a redevelopment opportunity... a mixed use zone with obsolete property... with an urgent need for redevelopment.'* The plans, originally proposed by the London County Council, were continued by the Greater London Council (GLC) in tandem with Westminster and Camden Councils.

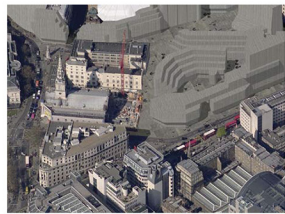
After a prolonged battle by local residents and long-established local businesses, led by the Covent Garden Community Association, and with much national support, the proposals for comprehensive redevelopment were overturned. In 1971 a seminal Public Inquiry helped turn the post-war tide for comprehensive redevelopment into more fruitful conservation based directions. Following the Inquiry, the late (Lord) Geoffrey Rippon had over 200 buildings in the area 'listed' and the GLC was instructed to draw up a new plan and establish a formal consultation body.

The Covent Garden Forum of Representatives (1974-1984) was ahead of its time and a model for current 'Localism'. Fifteen residents were elected biennially from the Electoral Register with fifteen businesses from a business register. The Forum had two non-voting seats on the GLC's Covent Garden Panel. The Forum saw through every aspect of both drawing up the new plan for Covent Garden and its implementation, including confidential lettings. Covent Garden, including Seven Dials, became a national exemplar of regeneration through partnership and the active conservation of the built heritage.

While there are many factors which contributed to the success of Covent Garden and Seven Dials as models for conservation and regeneration, it is indisputable that none of this would have been achieved without the tenacity, vision and commitment of local people prepared to stand up for their neighbourhood. Not least among them is our own Chairman, David Bieda, who organised and led a two week 'Objection to the 1971 Public Inquiry', was a member of the Seven Dials Housing Action Area Committee, chaired the Covent Garden Forum of Representatives' Housing Committee and was a founder trustee of the Covent Garden Area Trust.



11-9-57.  
**COUNTY HALL EXHIBITION OF L.C.C. PLANS FOR FUTURE MIXED DEVELOPMENT OF CENTRAL LONDON.**  
 An exhibition of models and plans is being held at County Hall, of the L.C.C. plans for the future mixed development of Central London. The idea being for blocks of offices - flats - hotels etc., to be together instead of sites being used for one type of development. This should avoid travel time waste.  
**KEYSTONE PHOTO SHOWS:-** A proposal for the Seven Dials area - showing block of flats at rear; shops and offices at right and the whole ground floor area being a warehouse - with roof playgrounds - gardens etc. for use by the flat dwellers.  
 JSS/ASKESTONE DIM/076617



Top left and right: London County Councils proposal for Seven Dials. Left: Proposals for demolition in South Covent Garden. Above: An entirely new look for Soho!



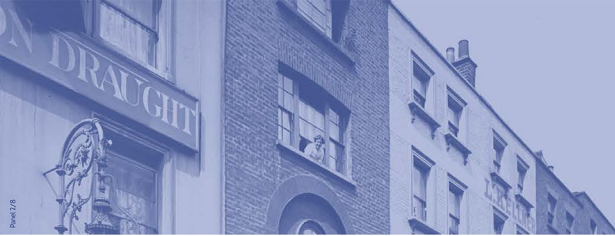
Top row, left to right: The General Appraisal shows most of Seven Dials as 'Mixed Use Obsolete Property' in the 1968 Plan; The 1968 plan illustrates the proposed zoning with Seven Dials as a form of Recreation Centre; The proposed pedestrian routes with Seven Dials highlighted in pink in the 1968 Plan; The overall revised 1971 Plan; The 1971 Plan - 'Conservation and Improvement' and only a small part of Seven Dials remains in the top left.  
 Bottom row, left to right: The 1971 Plan 'Pedestrian Network' showing first floor level walkways covering much of Seven Dials top left; A protest poster; Two of the many demonstrations and marches.



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 Endell Street

# From Demolition to Conservation 1971-1984



## DERELICTION AT THE DIALS

In the early 1970s, Seven Dials was in a state of dereliction which is difficult to comprehend today. 40 years of planning blight had left many residential and other buildings empty and neglected in the expectation of redevelopment. The planners took dereliction to mean demolition. 90% of the housing stock had lain empty for more than 40 years.

Between 1977-1984, a Housing Action Area Committee comprised of 12 local residents and local businesses supported by an outstanding group of Camden officers, brought back into use all 200 vacant residential units and encouraged much new public and private housing. With grants of up to 90% of costs, all the late seventeenth century houses were restored and the long process of urban regeneration begun, with new businesses moving into the area. Seven Dials was also declared as a Conservation Area with Outstanding Status – a far cry from the previous plans.

All these moves arose through lobbying by the Covent Garden Community Associations, residents and long standing businesses. The process of regeneration was continued by what was to become The Seven Dials Trust, established at the request of Frank Nickson, Camden's Chief Executive. The new Trust's first action was to persuade Esso to sell their petrol station on the Dials. This was a double win, as it restored the integrity of the Dials and provided more housing through the redevelopment of the site.

## THE SUNDIAL PILLAR: REINVENTING A LOST NEIGHBOURHOOD

Although run down, Seven Dials was a thriving neighbourhood, with vibrant street markets and a large population before 1939, but gradually the proposals for demolition took their toll and the population reached its nadir in the 1960s. Except for the small remaining population, the name Seven Dials was best known as a novel by Agatha Christie.

The reconstruction of the Sundial Pillar reinvented what had become a lost neighbourhood in the city centre and also acted as an economic regenerator.

The Trust chairman David Bieda, who lived on the Dials, recalls "Before the Pillar went up no-one ever walked past mentioning Seven Dials, but afterwards many passers-by talked about Seven Dials as though it was a new discovery. This was a forgotten historic neighbourhood which the Sundial Pillar both brought back to life and recreated its lost identity."

As the Architects Journal (*right*) wrote: "The re-erected column now serves as a wonderful object-lesson in the creation of both urban space and street life. What had degenerated into a mere crossroads has once again become a Classical circus..." Tony Aldous wrote in *History Today*: "Once more the Seven Dials catch the sunlight and restore meaning to a famous place name."



Above, left to right: 17th century houses, Monmouth Street; 23 Mercer Street; Shorts Gardens 1970; Endell Street 1970. Far left: 38 Monmouth Street; Left, centre: Monmouth Street mid 1960s. Left: The petrol station on the Dials – now Fielding Court.



**THE VIBRANT DIALS**  
Above: Lively streets in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.  
Left: A thriving street market just off Seven Dials.  
**THE DESOLATE DIALS IN 1960**  
Right: A dead space with the petrol station on the right.



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**RESURRECTION** Left to right: Evening Standard 1989; Architects Journal 1989; Evening Standard 1989; Evening Standard 1992. Media coverage can be seen on our website: [www.sevendials.com/the-media](http://www.sevendials.com/the-media)

# Some Seven Dials Trust Projects 1984-2019

## THE SEVEN DIALS RENAISSANCE STUDY & COMPANY WEBSITE

The public realm work displayed on these boards arises from the Trust's *Seven Dials Renaissance Study* first published in 1991 to national acclaim and a congratulatory debate in the House of Lords. The Trust was invited to apply for Government funding which led to the 1998 version. In the Summer of 2019 the Trust will publish a new web based version with many innovative features. These studies provide a practical holistic and long term vision for the totality of the public realm to which local authorities, freeholders and tenants can subscribe to their benefit and that of residents and the areas many visitors from all over the world. They propose improvements to streets under the control of the local authority and façades under private ownership and thus integrate and provide a realisable vision for the whole streetscape. [www.sevendials.study](http://www.sevendials.study)

We have also created a new company website – [www.sevendials.com](http://www.sevendials.com) – with much information on the area's history, the Trust's projects, and the detailed work re-creating London's Missing Monument, the Seven Dials Sundial Pillar.

## PEOPLE'S PLAQUES

This scheme celebrates individuals and institutions who have made a contribution to London and beyond. Research by historian Steve Denford uncovered 131 possible plaques honed down to 30 by a group of local residents and businesses. Each plaque has a sponsor whose name is on a small QR code beneath the plaque which leads to a section on our website with more information about the sponsor and subject of each plaque.

## INTEGRATING STREET FURNITURE

The use of bollards in Seven Dials dates back to the seventeenth century. Protective stone bollards are shown on Edward Pierce's original design of the Sundial Pillar and around the Covent Garden Piazza. The use of bollards was the same as today: to segregate vehicles, both horse-and-man-powered, from buildings and people. Designers often laid them out to contribute the pattern and arrangement of buildings and spaces. The original materials used were stone and timber, progressively replaced by cast iron, each area often boasting elaborate decorative designs.

When the first *Renaissance Study* was published in 1990, we were confronted by discordant and unsightly street furniture and lamp columns. The concept of using the Golden Hind symbol, which is part of the heraldic crest of the ancient Parish of St Giles-in-the-Fields, was developed by Peter Heath, co-author of the original *Seven Dials Renaissance Studies*. In partnership with Camden and Shaftesbury, the Trust has developed this theme for bollards, litter-bins, street name plates and recently for its People's Plaques and Street History Plaques schemes. In addition to consistency, they all refer to the area's history, building on the distinct sense of place in Seven Dials.



Top row, left to right: Westminster Extra; Map of the plaque positions; Cilla Black unveils the plaque to Brian Epstein; Worldwide coverage; Roxy press: Fear & Loathing – the Roxy Exhibition. Above, left to right: Kathryn Gutteridge, President of the Royal College of Midwives, & Cllr Jenny Headlam-Wells, Mayor of Camden, unveil the plaque to Darne Rosalind Paget & Zepherina Veitch; Press coverage; Some plaques. format by trustee Paul Draper and layout by trustee Jamal Uddin gratis; QR code plaque designed by trustee Mark Read leads to our website with more information about each plaque and sponsor.



## STREET HISTORY PLAQUES

Top row, left to right: The Dials; Shorts Gardens; Monmouth Street; Far left: Mercer Street; Left: Ealham Street



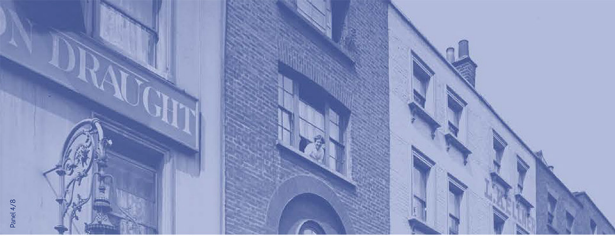
Left: Street furniture as a mess. Below: Well designed integrated street furniture enhancing the public realm and illuminating the areas history.



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# Integrating Street and Façade Improvements



## STREETS

Street improvements have been a partnership – initially between the Trust, Camden and the Kleinwort Benson Property Fund (KBPF) and latterly with Shaftesbury, the area's major freeholder. Improvements to date have been based on the template set out in the Seven Dials Renaissance Study, which is intended to set high standards for street improvements where London has lagged behind many European cities. The work in Monmouth Street, using multi-coloured dressed setts has influenced works throughout the West End.

'The Seven Dials scheme has been of national importance in changing attitudes to and aspirations for the public realm. For well over a decade it has been used in presentations given throughout the UK to demonstrate what can be done to create a sense of place and establish an environment where pedestrians and traffic can successfully and positively intermingle.'

— ROBERT HUXFORD, DIRECTOR, URBAN DESIGN GROUP

Dressed setts (flat cobbles) have many advantages: they reduce vehicular noise, they are safer and easier for pedestrians to walk across and they reflect the various colours more vibrantly than traditional cobbles. Their use in Monmouth Street proved universally popular. However subsequent excavations, faulty reinstatement by the various utilities companies, and apparent failures in design/implementation have compromised the carriageway.

More recent works 2018 in Earlharm Street West have been successful using the same palette of materials as Monmouth Street but with a deeper concrete base and larger setts, and less traffic. The street was full of parking and motorcycle bays with narrow footways, now transformed with residents parking and motorcycles relocated, wider footways and multi-use for market stalls and parking. The new web based *Renaissance Study* sets out a long term template and detailed proposals for the Dials and the other streets: [www.sevendials.study](http://www.sevendials.study).

## FAÇADES

Both the first and 1998 versions of the *Seven Dials Renaissance Studies* 'Building by Building' sections recommended wide ranging proposals for façade improvements aimed at the private sector, thus tying in streets in public ownership and façades in private ownership. Many of these recommendations have been implemented, particularly by Shaftesbury the area's largest freeholder.

'We still have your Study here which has been our "Bible" since our first Investments in Seven Dials...'

— JONATHAN LANE, PAST CEO OF SHAFTESBURY



*Above, left to right:* Stakeholders consultation on Monmouth Street with Camden officers; Monmouth Street in the 1960s; Before works; Laying multi-coloured (flat) setts; The works completed in 2006; Being admired by Princess Anne.



*Above:* The use of multi-coloured setts pioneered in Monmouth Street has been widely replicated and above are, *left to right*, King Street Covent Garden, Long Acre and Mercer Street South. The completed works, which cost c£800,000, were described by Peter Bishop, when Design Director for London, as the best street in the city.



*Above:* Earlharm Street West before and after works with cluttered parking and a much signage now removed.

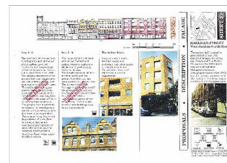
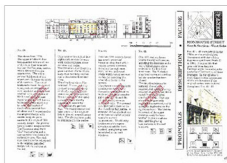
*Above:* 2018 with the Seven Dials bollards denoting the entrance to the area, and reverse from the Dials, with a new circle of granite setts – a transformed streetscape. The closure off Earlharm Street at Cambridge Circus was proposed in the first *Renaissance Study* in 1991.



*Above:* Shelton Street before and after, many of the houses date from the 1690s.

*Above:* Earlharm Street before and after, works by Shaftesbury.

*Above:* Monmouth Street before and after including soot washing by Shaftesbury.



*Left:* Pages from the 1998 *Renaissance Study* showing some of the many façade recommendations which have been implemented.

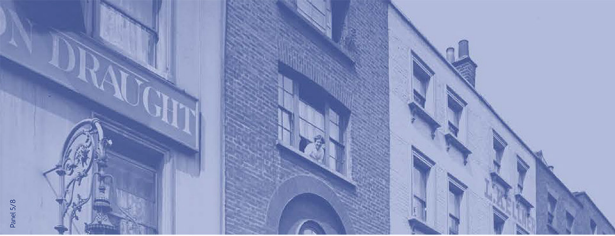


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# The Covent Garden Lighting Partnership



## RE-LIGHTING COVENT GARDEN

The *Renaissance Study* recommends the removal of lamp columns and their replacement by façade lanterns. This frees up the footways, casts a better light and does away with graffiti and the costly need to maintain columns. In 2006 the Trust set up this unusual cross-border Partnership with Camden, Westminster, Historic England, Shaftesbury, the Mercers' Company and Capitol and Counties Plc. We rejected existing 'historic' lanterns as pastiche and set about designing our own bespoke Windsor style lantern, the first time a charity has ever embarked on such a project.

The lanterns and brackets (for both façade and post mounted lanterns) were designed gratis by trustee Paul Draper who has played a signal role in much of the Trust's work. Lighting engineers from Camden, Westminster and the Corporation of London listed every fault they'd encountered and Paul designed these out to create a long life and elegant lantern, now trade marked as *The Covent Garden Lantern®*. All parts are bolted not welded and the lantern has a double seal preventing dirt ingress, all key issues raised by the lighting engineers. The project achieves a dramatic reduction in both carbon emissions and energy use and makes use of modern technology and the Victorian 'sugar bowl' (see below) which both reduces glare and creates an ideal light spread. Street lighting is not just about meeting regulations; it's also about creating an ambience suitable for conservation areas. *The Covent Garden Lantern®* weighs around 18kgs, far heavier than others on the market, due to robust construction leading to a long life product.

Stage 1. In 2015 saw the installation of 51 façade lanterns throughout Seven Dials and across the border into Westminster.

Stage 2. In 2019 sees further installations in Floral, Neal's Tower, Stacey and West Streets, New Row and Conduit and Floral Courts all with a specially designed Zeta LED which fits within our 'sugar bowl'. All 51 Stage 1. lanterns will be retrofitted with the Zeta LED in 2019.

Commercial lighting companies spend hundreds of thousands developing new products. The Trust has spent less than £12,000 plus a vast amount of voluntary time on attention to detail plus the time of our lighting engineer colleagues.



Before we started there were a great plethora of different styles of lanterns, graffiti on columns and much damage. In streets with narrow footways the road camber means lornie damage lanterns and all this costs the taxpayer.

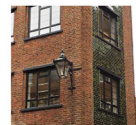
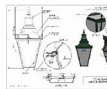


**METICULOUS PLANNING** Above, left to right: Lighting Group members on a mini bus tour of façade lighting in three London boroughs; John Burke Corporation of London giving a key talk on the use of the Victorian sugar bowl which had hitherto been dismissed by our local authorities; Paul Draper and David Bieda at Lefebvres factory in Beaugency France. Our French colleagues were keen to point out that Joan of Arc had beaten the English at Beaugency!

Below: A small sample of the many drawings needed to bring the project to fruition and then create modifications.



Left to right: Paul creating the model for the Acrotaria; His drawing of same; The cast brass model. Below, left to right: One of Paul's survey drawings of 19c lanterns; The final version of the *Covent Garden Lantern®* façade sugar bowl version; Paul's clever 'frog' which connects the lantern to a column and this case hides the wiring which no-one has thought of before. The prototype frog.



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Above, left to right: Lighting engineers and the Trust approving the final V3 prototype; Trustees beneath V3 which proved that use of the sugar bowl reduced glare and created an ideal light spread; Stakeholders meeting to test out three LED units in Shelton Street where there are no shop lights; Lanterns in Mercer Walk with the LED Zeta reducing carbon emissions and energy needs; *Covent Garden Lantern®* in Earlam Street West; Highways Magazine Award – the first for a lighting project, the first for a charity, and a first for all the Partnership Members.

# Shopping, Greening and a History Lesson

**THE TRUSTS SHOP** The Kleinwort Benson Property Fund lent the Trust a shop on the Dials pending their Thomas Neale's scheme, also used as our Unveiling base. Both the National Trust and English Heritage assisted in developing a range of high quality limited edition products, most of which sold out before the roof collapsed! Paul Draper and David Bieda spent much time tarmacking the roof to no avail. Our first Exhibition was on display in the basement. Trustee Paul Draper designed the interior and did much of the carpentry work assisted gratis by interior designer Paul Dylon.



**GREENING SEVEN DIALS** Tree planting did not exist when the area was laid out in the 1690s and poses problems due to vaults and reducing daylight in buildings by narrow footways. The *Renaissance Study* recommended returning to Victorian times when Seven Dials was described as '...the hanging Gardens of Babylon' with planting on the wide entablatures above shopfront. The Trust with the Covent Garden Community Association and Camden Council devised a plan for tree planting in Endell Street as the only boulevard street, tree clusters elsewhere and window boxes with support from Shaftesbury.



**THE MILLENNIUM GREENING PROJECT** The Trust's Millennium Greening Project involved pupils from St. Joseph's and St. Clement Danes tasked with planting 18 plants into 18' circumference hanging baskets without tangling the wires. Each group had a two hour lesson from the Royal Horticultural Society in advance of their planting and received T shirts and certificates signed by the Mayor of Camden and the Lord Mayor of Westminster. At the request of both schools, chairman David Bieda took the planting classes - David had been a long-standing youth and community worker in Covent Garden.

*Left to right:* St Clement Danes RHS class and planting; St Joseph's team; Some of their hanging baskets. Media coverage.



*Left:* Superstars Wajid, Felicity and Max with Frank Dobson MP and Cllr Louise Hyams, Lord Mayor of Westminster; Superstars testing their magic wand. *Below:* Flutterfetti launch and the banners.



**A HISTORY LESSON FOR LONDON** The Trust took the opportunity of the Sundial Pillar being scaffolded for restoration and cleaning in 2011 to create four 30' high history banners. They featured *Thomas Neale MP - The Great Project* and creator of Seven Dials, *Edward Pierce* - the greatest mason and sculptor of the seventeenth century and creator of the Sundial Pillar, *Neale's lotteries and the 1694 Lottery Box*, and *Why Build Seven Streets?* Rents in the seventeenth century were by frontage. Using the novel 'star' layout meant that Neale could fit in 311 houses, maximising his land value and making another fortune.

The banners were launched by Superstars Wajid and Zaynah Uddin (6 and 8) and Felicity Rigby Kaner (7), children of trustees. Frank Dobson MP was the fairy with the magic wand, assisted by the Lord Mayor of Westminster Cllr Louise Hyams. This was followed by a reception in the newly re-opened community centre, the Seven Dials Club, attended by local residents and businesses. The project was generously sponsored by Legal & General Property who developed Central St. Giles just north of Monmouth Street.



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# The Pillar and some Awards

## SUNDIAL PILLAR CLEANING & RESTORATION 2011 & 2016

It is not generally known that the Trust, rather than the local authority, owns the Seven Dials Sundial Pillar and is therefore responsible for its upkeep. High level inspections in 2009 revealed an alarming amount of damage to the dial faces and other carved areas and we embarked on a fund-raising exercise to implement restoration works and re-gilding of the dial faces and orb. Legal & General Property, the joint developers of nearby Central St. Giles, kindly enabled these works, with assistance from the Heritage of London Trust, Shaftesbury and Camden's Community Chest, in 2011.

Further work was carried out in 2015 by Thomann Henry and will be needed again in 2019 as the dial face paint is flaking.

## LIGHTING THE SUNDIAL PILLAR

Philips Lighting UK proposed various schemes to light the Pillar which were tested on site. In the end only the dial faces were lit due to the inadequate light throw to the base when tested.

Camden Council installed three large Rochester columns with the old Borough of Holborn crest for the new dial face lamps.

## PLUNGE EVENT 2012

In 2012, the Sundial Pillar at Seven Dials joined two of London's other tall landmarks in a project devised by the artist Michael Pinsky and organised by Arts Admin and LIFT.

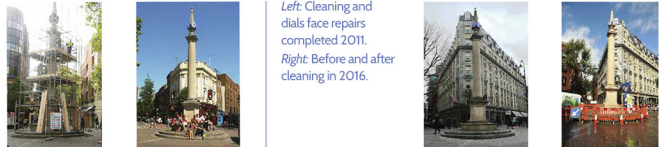
This project demonstrated the likely sea level in 1,000 years' time, if global warming continues on its current trajectory and the implications for London. A ring of light was installed on the Sundial Pillar, on the Monument and on the Duke of York's column – each at the height of predicted sea level. For the Sundial Pillar the ring was set at 4.8 metres – drowning everything at ground and first floor levels.



Above and left: Caroline Webb who carved and gilded the faces in 1989, and the state of the dial faces



Left: Cleaning and dial face repairs completed 2011. Right: Before and after cleaning in 2016.



Above and left: Plunge event 2012



Above: Philips scheme which could not light the base clearly when tested on site.

Above: Camden's plans: three Rochester Columns with the crest of the Old Borough of Holborn.

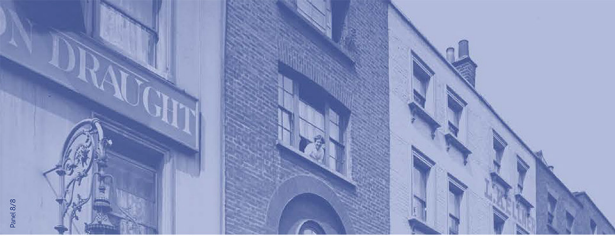


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**AWARDS** Left, top row, left to right: For the Pillar Appeal; Camden for *Seven Dials Renaissance Study*; Camden for Monmouth Street works: Presentation for works in Monmouth Street. Left, middle row, left to right: Way Forward for Covent Garden for the Trust and Shaftesbury: For a project which has 'stood the test of time'; For the Trust's various newsletters. Left, bottom row, left to right: For street furniture and plaques – A wide ranging and brilliant scheme; For the Covent Garden Lighting Partnership: At the awards: Dave Franks, Westminster City Council Lighting Manager, Trustees Paul Draper, designer of the lighting, Janet Cole-Brooman and Jamal Uddin; For Covent Garden Façade lighting.

# Planning and Listing Matters



The Trust rarely objects to planning application as we are not an elected body unlike the Covent Garden Community Association (CGCA) who are the recognised amenity group for Covent Garden in both Camden and Westminster. Below are the key planning and listings where the Trust has been involved – all involved issues where the Trust, the CGCA, and latterly the Covent Garden Area Trust (CGAT) felt the Seven Dials and Covent Garden Conservation Areas would suffer serious damage. The CGAT has a 150 year lease over the Piazza and surrounds.



*Above left:* Earlham Street. *Above right:* Monmouth Street. In 1991, just as the first *Seven Dials Renaissance Study* was published, P&O Properties made an application for wholesale demolition of their properties on the north west side of Earlham Street and the south east side of Monmouth Street above, a death knell for Seven Dials. To widespread astonishment these proposals were recommended for approval by officers from both Camden Council and English Heritage. David Bieda for the Trust and Sue Vincent for the Covent Garden Community Association made a deputation to Camden's Development Control Committee (DCSC), where trustee Paul Draper's analysis of P&O's proposals and the *Renaissance Study* led to the DCSC unanimously rejecting the application. P&O's subsequent Appeal was dismissed by the Inspector who gave great weight to the *Seven Dials Renaissance Study*. This led to Shaftesbury's initial acquisitions in Seven Dials which, in turn, led to the fruitful partnership between the Trust and Shaftesbury, whose estate management policies usually accord with the Trusts objectives.



*Left:* After a lengthy meeting between David Bieda and Jim Inglis, Allied London's CEO, Allied agreed to re-visit their proposal for demolition and re-development of the ex-brewery 18c building at 25 Shelton Street. Their architects subsequently liaised with the Trust on many of the details of what became an excellent and commercially successful refurbishment scheme.



*Above:* Our key listing success has been the Seven Dials Warehouse, the best preserved of the magnificent former brewery buildings on the Camden and Westminster border. The Trust's policy with the former brewery buildings has been to encourage refurbishment on the grounds that it is as commercially successful as expensive redevelopment schemes. The overall commercial success of Covent Garden has been based on the principle of active conservation of the built heritage. This image of the Woodyard Brewery is from 1888 and the facade remains almost unaltered – the Seven Dials Warehouse is in the centre.



*Above:* The Mercers' Company, who have significant commercial and residential property holdings north of Long Acre, proposed a hugely expensive scheme involving a high degree of intervention for their Block 'B'. The Trust and the CGCA put in detailed objections based on the principle that refurbishment would make more commercial sense. Uniquely Westminster City Council allowed (private) deputations from both sides. Nevertheless, the Mercers obtained planning consent. However, they had a change of heart, recognising that the Trust and CGCA's case was indeed more commercially viable and preferable in conservation terms.



*Above left:* Dryden and Arne Streets *Above right:* Drury Lane and Dryden Street. In 2015 Helical Bar proposed a scheme for the block bounded by Drury Lane, Dryden, Arne and Shelton Streets involving much demolition of well-preserved Victoria warehouses. For the first time all three local groups objected jointly at the suggestion of David Bieda, who with Paul Velluet, spent much time on this project. Initially approved by Westminster City Council a second application was rejected. The groups engaged with the developers at a series of meetings and the outcome involved retention of the historic fabric and in our view a far better scheme where the proposed additional storeys were largely in keeping with the existing façades.



In 2018 Shaftesbury proposed a scheme for 39–49 Neal Street. *Left above* is as existing and as proposed on the *right*. Unfortunately both Camden's *Conservation Area Statement* and the *Renaissance Study* mis-described the centre building as a 1960s rebuild when in fact it is a Victorian warehouse with modern window inserts, rectified in the new web study. All three groups objected and the scheme was rejected. The groups regretted the need to object in view of Shaftesbury's excellent stewardship of their Seven Dials Estate.

## SOME TRUST PUBLICATIONS



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