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Design and Access/ Planning/ Heritage Statement

31st Jan 2024

New Shopfront, Ground floor front elevation to **No. 147-149 Wardour Street, W1F 8WD**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Design and Access / Planning / Heritage Statement is submitted on behalf of the applicant in respect of a planning application for a new shopfront. This Statement should be read in conjunction with other drawings and documents accompanying the planning application.

The signage on this proposed shopfront has recently been granted under Application, Consent to Display an Advertisement(s) Ref No. **23/07106/ADV**, which remains the same and is indicated in the proposed drawing.

1.2 This Statement comprises:

- A description of the application properties and surrounding area;
- A description of the proposed development;
- A summary of relevant planning history; and,
- An assessment of the proposed development against relevant planning policy.

2.0 APPLICATION PROPERTY AND SURROUNDING AREA

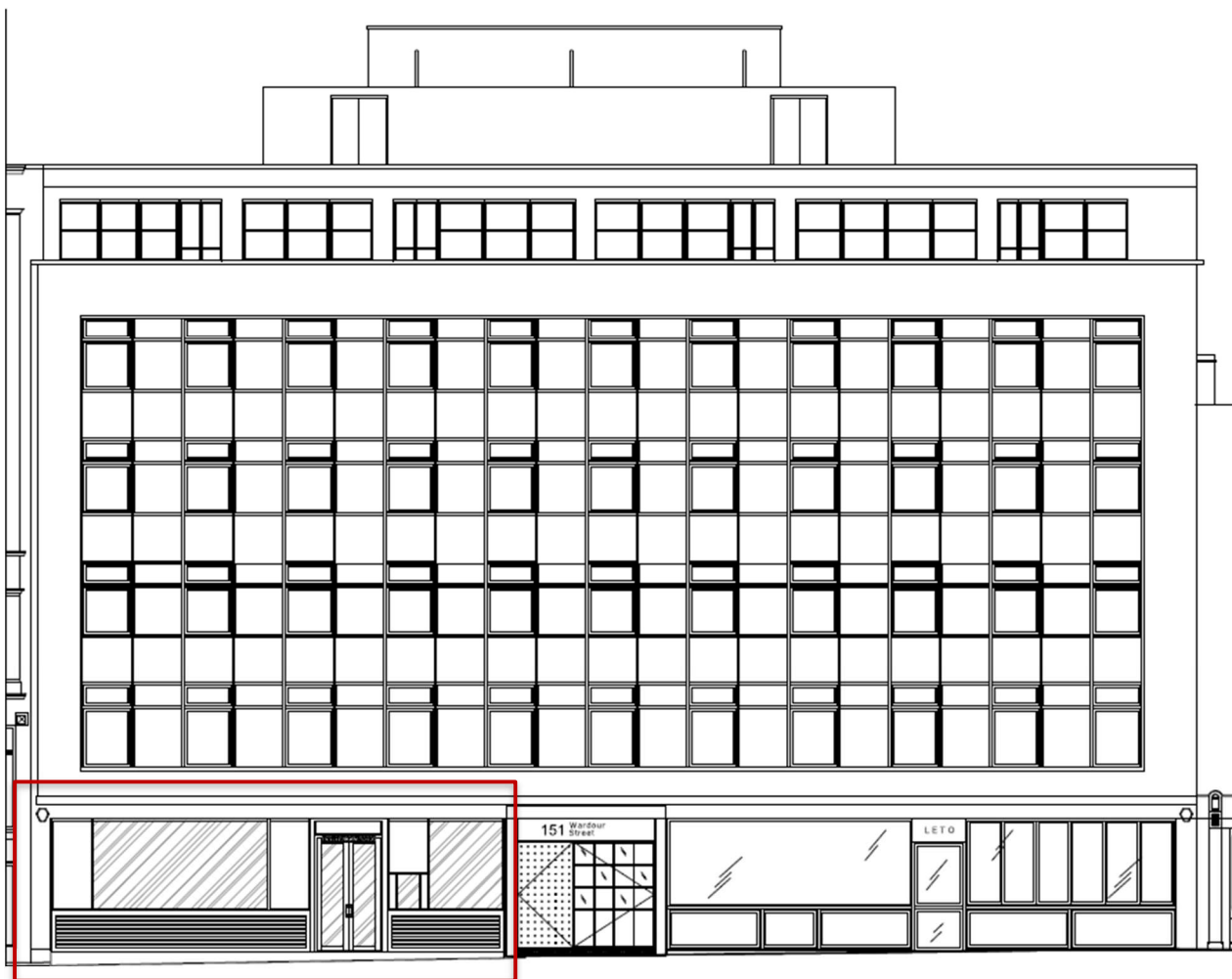
2.1 The application relates to the ground floor of No. 147-149 Wardour Street, which sits within an overall multi-storey building. The overall property is mixed-use. The premises have been vacant for some time, with the existing 'shopfront' boarded up and detracting significantly from the street scene. The previous shopfront that existed here (as evident in old Street view Imagery) was of no architectural or visual merit.

2.2 The site is located within a wider mixed-use area. There is a wide variety of overall building scale and form in the area.

2.3 The property is not listed, nor are neighbouring properties. The site is located within the Soho Conservation Area.

3.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 It is proposed to install a new contemporary shopfront that is carefully considered to maintain the character and appearance of the area. Reference is taken from the neighbouring L'ETO shopfront and the entrance of the building.



147-149 Wardour Street

4.0 PLANNING HISTORY

4.1

- Application Ref. No. 19/10106/FULL - Granted in 2020 for the installation of a new shopfront
- Application Ref. No. 23/07105/FULL – Refused in 2023 for the installation of a new shopfront
- Application Ref. No. 23/06499/FULL – Granted in 2024 for Alterations to the rear elevation fronting Wardour Mews to replace windows and doors with louvres to serve a new substation.
- Application Ref. No. 23/07106/ADV – Agreed in 2024 for the signage on the shopfront
**This remains the same and is indicated in the proposed drawing.
- Application Ref. No: 23/07623/FULL – Pending. Applied in 2024 for the installation of mechanical plant at rear ground floor level fronting onto Wardour Mews; installation of a further duct on the rear ground floor elevation; installation of further plant within existing plant enclosure at main roof level.

5.0 PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF) seeks to support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation (para. 86 refers).

The proposed development is not considered contrary to NPPF policy. The overall area within which the premises sit is a mixed-use, vibrant area with significant variety in shopfronts and signage.

London Plan (2021)

5.2 Policy SD6 of the new London Plan (2021) recognises the importance of mixed-use town centres and supporting continued growth of commercial activity.

The proposed development is considered wholly in compliance with London Plan policy.

Westminster City Plan 2019-2040

5.3 As per the Westminster Proposals Map, the site is within the Soho Conservation Area, Soho Special Policy Area, and West End Retail and Leisure Special Policy Area.

5.4 Policy 14 (Town centres, high streets, and the CAZ) is of relevance to the proposal. It states:

“A. The intensification of town centres, high streets and the CAZ to provide additional floorspace for main town centre uses is supported in principle, subject to impact on townscape and heritage. Proposals in existing town centres and high streets will enhance and diversify their offer as places to shop, work and spend leisure time.

B. Uses that provide active frontages and serve visiting members of the public will be required at the ground floor throughout the town centre hierarchy. Uses serving visiting members of the public will also be supported at first floor level within centres characterised by large format, multi-level stores. The use of upper floors for residential use is supported in principle across all parts of the town centre hierarchy except the International Centres.

C. All development within the town centre hierarchy will be of a scale, type and format that reflects and enhances the role and function of the centre within which it is proposed. ...”

The proposed development would not in any way be contrary to this policy.

5.5 Policies 39 (Heritage) and 40 (Townscape and Architecture) of the City Plan are of relevance. They state:

39. “...Works to listed buildings will preserve their special interest, relating sensitively to the period and architectural detail of the building and protecting or, where appropriate, restoring original or significant detail and historic fabric...”

...Development will preserve or enhance the character and appearance of Westminster’s conservation areas. Features that contribute positively to the significance of conservation areas and their settings will be conserved and opportunities taken to enhance conservation areas and their settings, wherever possible...”

40. “...Spaces and features that form an important element in Westminster’s local townscapes or contribute to the significance of a heritage asset will be conserved, enhanced and sensitively integrated within new development, including important architectural details, boundary walls and railings, historic roof forms or structures, open lightwells, historic or characteristic shopfronts and street furniture, as well as squares, parks and gardens. Where possible, lost or damaged features will be reinstated or restored...”

The proposal is not considered contrary to these policies for the reasons set out in this Statement.

5.6 There would be no adverse impacts to neighbouring residential amenities. ***No new building footprint is being created. The proposal has regard to Westminster Guidance on Shopfronts, Blinds and Signs in so far as is feasible given the unique and statement nature of what is proposed.***

Soho Conservation Area

5.7 According to the Soho & Chinatown Conservation Area Audit, the special interest of the conservation area is multi-faceted and includes its vibrancy, narrow streets, growing residential population, townscape, and diversity. No. 147 is not an unlisted building of merit. With regards to the conservation area's special features, it is not considered that the proposed works would in any way adversely affect the character. There would be no negligible impact on the public realm whatsoever. Indeed, the proposed shopfront would be in keeping with the variety of shopfronts nearby and would improve the quality and architectural interest of this section of this particular section of Wardour Street, which has been neglected and shut off for some time.

6.0 CONCLUSION

6.1 The proposed development is considered to be in compliance with NPPF policies.

6.2 The proposal is also considered in compliance with the Westminster City Plan.