



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 June 2021

by D Szymanski BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 July 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/X5210/Z/21/3271750

174 Camden High Street, London NW1 0NE

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 against a refusal to grant express consent.
 - The appeal is made by Maximus Maximise against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Camden.
 - The application Ref 2020/4094/A, dated 7 September 2020, was refused by notice dated 15 February 2021.
 - The advertisement proposed is Display of a temporary scaffold shroud with replica of building façade and externally illuminated advertisement panels for a period of 8 months.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. During the determination of the application the appellant submitted amended proposals to remove illumination from the advertisements. The Council's decision notice indicates the original and amendment scheme were considered in reaching its decision. My determination is also made on this basis.
3. The appellant has submitted an amended plan of the Greenland Road elevation to remove the advertisement space. It is understood that this amendment was offered to the Council in the determination of the application. I have had regard to it in determining this appeal.
4. Regulation 3(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 requires a Local Planning Authority shall exercise its powers amongst other things, in the interests of amenity taking into account
 - (a) the provisions of the development plan, so far as they are material; and
 - (b) any other relevant factors. I have considered the appeal on this basis.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposed advertisement on the amenity of the area including the character and appearance of the Camden Town Conservation Area (CTCA).

Reasons

6. The appeal site is an attractive four storey building on the corner Greenland Road and Camden High Street/Camden Road, which form part of a wider multi-

junction arrangement with other busy commercial streets, creating an open street scene. The building has an angled façade comprising three main elevations and part of the Camden High Street elevation projects slightly forward of other buildings in the terrace. Therefore, the appeal site building is in a highly prominent location visible from a number of directions.

7. It lies within the north eastern part of the CTCA where there is a statutory duty under section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (LBCAA) to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing its character or appearance. The CTCA is characterised by, and derives its significance from, historic routes lined by a variety of well-preserved mostly stock brick and stucco terraced residential and commercial buildings understood to date mostly from the 18th – 20th centuries.
8. In the vicinity of the appeal site the CTCA derives its significance and is characterised by the busy transport routes, commercial ground floor shop fronts, and the variety of well-preserved 19th and 20th century buildings. The appeal site building dates from around 1875, integrating stock brick, sash windows with decorative surrounds and a windowed mansard roof. While some repair works are needed, it makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the CTCA. Its importance is referenced in the Camden Town Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy (2007), in which it is listed as a positive building and a focal building in long views.
9. The scaffold would be erected to which the shroud and advertisement space would be attached. At approximately 12.8m in height, the shroud would be a significant height above much of the roof, so it would not comply with paragraph 1.26 of the Camden Planning Guidance: Advertisements (2018) (the CPGA). With the omission of the Greenland Road elevation advertisement space, the large advertising spaces would comprise approximately 10% of two of the respective elevations at first floor level. While there might be a technical conflict overall with the 10% threshold for each elevation, in my view the effect of the conflict in itself would not be significant.
10. Despite the busy and diverse commercial character of the surrounds, adverts mainly comprise fascia signs and other signage on the ground floor shop fronts. Including having regard to the omission of illumination and the advertising space on the Greenland Road elevation, there are no such large scale advertisement hoardings or other similar large scale advertisements nearby. While it would be temporary, due to the scale, height, and forward projection of the shroud, and the scale and position of the advertising spaces, they would be dominant, incongruent, and significantly harmful to the building and area. Whether it is blue or another colour, the strip above the roof would be likely to contrast with the sky at times, adding to the incongruence.
11. The absence of illumination and reduced advertising space would reduce the visual harm. However, even having regard to this, the prominent position on the junction means the shroud and advertising space would be highly visible as a dominant and incongruent feature, from the public realm in multiple directions in proximity to the appeal site. There would also be medium distance visibility from Parkway, Camden Road and Camden High Street. Therefore, the proposal would appear highly visible as an incongruent, visually dominant, and harmful feature causing significant harm to the character and appearance of the CTCA, the host building and the amenity of the area. As a

- consequence, the advertisement would neither preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CTCA, in conflict with the aims of section 72(1) of the LBCAA.
12. Previous consents were granted for shrouding, including in 2016, for which the Council has provided an image showing a shroud, yet is it understood the repair works did not place. The appellant has not challenged the accuracy of this image. The schedule of works document, indicates some repairs, might be important to prevent long-term damage to the building and therefore be of a benefit to a heritage asset. Some scaffolding may be necessary for health and safety reasons. However, many of the works are not clearly detailed to enough to understand where they would take place.
 13. Of the more limited amount that are identifiable at the appeal site, much of them appear to be at roof or ground floor fascia level and the duration of them is not fully clear. Furthermore, a significant amount of works appear to be on other properties nearby. I note the revenue from the advertisements may subsidise the works, which might be of increased importance given the economic impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the evidence provided does not demonstrate the shroud is essential for the works to take place.
 14. For the reasons set out above, based upon the evidence before me, the location, extent, and duration of the shroud is not justified. Therefore, the proposals do not meet the requirement of Policy D4 of the London Borough of Camden Local Plan (2017) (the Local Plan) that advertisements on shopfronts that are above fascia level or ground floor level, will be resisted, except in exceptional circumstances. Given the harm I have found and the absence of adequate justification for the proposals, the benefits do not outweigh the significant overall harm to the character and appearance of the CTCA, the host building and the amenity of the area, which attracts great weight.
 15. In principle a shroud is likely to be less harmful than scaffold mesh. The Inspector made similar findings in Ref APP/A5840/Z/20/3256545. However, in that case the Inspector did not appear raise concerns about the necessity of the shroud in relation to the works, which in the case of this appeal proposal I find are not adequately justified.
 16. For the reasons set out above the advertisement would be harmful to the amenity of the area. I have had regard to Policies D2 and D4 of the Local Plan. These are of relevance insofar as they seek advertisements preserve or enhance the character of their setting and host building, preserve or enhance Conservation Areas, respect the form, fabric, and scale of their setting and host building and be of the highest standard of design. These are consistent with paragraph 132 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) which has similar aims.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons given above, having regard to all the matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Dan Szymanski

INSPECTOR