
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 August 2025

by Mr Cullum Parker BA(Hons) PGCert MA FRGS MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 02 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/Y/25/3364816

16 Nelson Road, LONDON, SE10 9JB

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) (PLBCAA) against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Mrs Natalie Edwards (Technical Sign Company) against the decision of Royal Borough of Greenwich.
 - The application Ref is 24/3107/L.
 - The works proposed are Installation of externally illuminated fascia text, retention of existing externally illuminated projection sign (in altered position), retention of existing non illuminated awning, retention of internally illuminated menu (in altered position).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. Another appeal for the same site, but for advertisement consent, has been submitted under reference APP/E5330/Z/25/3359606. This is the subject of a separate decision letter. The s20 PLBCAA appeal in this decision relates to the refusal of listed building consent.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is whether or not the proposed works would preserve the listed building; including any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses and whether or not it preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the conservation area.

Reasons

4. The appeal building is a Grade II listed building that is located in the West Greenwich Conservation Area and the Greenwich World Heritage Site. The fact it is a listed building appears to be omitted from the Appellant's Heritage Statement. Nevertheless, the Council Officer's report details the listing entry for the building.
5. The Officer Report indicates that it was designed by Joseph Kay in 1829 with Nos 15 to 25 (consec) forming a group with No 19 King William Walk. A number of features have been retained along the terrace, including 3 over 3 windows at second floor level and 6 over 6 windows on the first floor with railings and balconies. Some of these features 'horns' (indicating that they are likely later Victorian windows) whereas others do not feature these (likely

- indicating windows from the late Regency period or at least retaining the design approach from that period).
6. At ground floor level, most of the units along the terrace are presented as retail or shop fronts with residential doors to upper floors provided at one side at many units. It is unclear whether or not the shop frontages are original as many have large, glazed areas in timber surrounds which suggest that they are Victorian or later additions or alterations, with timber stallrisers and recessed or set back thresholds. Nevertheless, the appeal site and the wider terrace have a generally uniform character; albeit with differing individual features.
 7. One feature where there is some variation is fascia signage. This is typically restrained to the fascia board itself, with many examples of individual spotlights used for illumination where this is found. There are also some limited examples of trough lighting used to illuminate fascia. Many of the fascia are hand painted signs and these play an important part in linking the modern retail operations on the ground floor to the traditional hand painted signage that would have likely been used for fascia for much of the life of these shops. In doing so, the use of hand painted signage in this location respects the historical and architectural character of the area.
 8. It is from architectural and historical features such as these, that the significance of both the listed building and this part of the conservation area derives.
 9. The appeal scheme seeks consent to use individual flat cut 8mm brushed stainless steel finished letters with a brass lacquer set on a repainted fascia board. The Appellant's Appeal Statement indicates that this would have a protrusion of 0.008mm. However, it is evident from the submitted drawing 596993-3 dated 25 September 2024 labelled as 'Proposed Signage', that the section through the text showing section A-A is annotated with 22mm being the distance between the front part of the proposed lettering and the fascia board. Therefore, on the basis of the Appellant's plans, it would have a greater protrusion from the fascia board than has been suggested by the Appellant.
 10. The Council's adopted *Shop signs, Advertisements and Illumination in Greenwich Town Centre Design Guidance Note (2003)* indicates that '*hand painted timber fascia are most commonly associated with historic shopfronts in Greenwich Town Centre*'. The guidance goes on to indicate that '*where existing fascias (sic) are out of scale or character with the shopfront or the building, the opportunity should be taken to install a replacement of a more traditional design and size*'.
 11. This clearly indicates that, wherever possible, the hand painted timber fascia board is preferred by the Council in this location. This continues to be case even now – 22 years after this guidance was first issued. This is logical given the heightened heritage status found within this part of the Royal Borough; with the appeal site benefitting from Listed Building, Conservation Area and World Heritage Site statuses respectfully.
 12. The proposal would result in the loss of hand painted signage within the fascia board, which is a typical feature of shop frontages within this area. As such, the proposed projecting individual lettering signage would result in a negative impact on the listed building and, therefore, would fail to preserve its special interest.

13. With regard to the projecting hanging sign, this is shown on the proposed drawing to be sited approximately 2540mm from the ground, whereas the existing hanging sign is roughly 2765mm from the ground. Whilst the lowering of the projecting sign would bring it into line with some examples found in the locality, it would be at odds with the Council's shop signs guidance which indicates that hanging signs '*must be positioned to take account of the design of the building...and hanging signs should be displayed in line with the fascia*'.
14. The proposal here would fail to adhere to this guidance. Instead it seeks to attach to a listed building a hanging sign that would be noticeable lower than existing and be at odds with the typical location of this architectural feature on a listed building in this location. As such, the proposed location and siting of the hanging sign would result in a negative impact on the listed building and fail to preserve its special interest.
15. Whilst I note the points made by the Appellants in terms of other non-hand painted timber signs within the area and that some hanging signs are in the lower position sought here, this does not provide justification for the harm that I have identified in this case.
16. Accordingly, after special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building as set out under s16(2) PLBCAA, I find that the proposed works would fail to preserve the special interest of the listed building. For similar reasons, the proposal would result in a negative impact on the heritage assets of the West Greenwich Conservation Area and the Greenwich World Heritage Site.
17. In this case, given the limited extent of the proposed works (principally to the fascia and hanging sign) I find that the proposal would result in no greater than less than substantial harm as set out in Paragraph 215 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (the Framework). For similar reasons, in articulating this harm further, as advised by the national Planning Practice Guidance, I consider that it would be within the lower end of the less than substantial harm type. Nevertheless, less than substantial harm does not equate to less than substantial planning objection and I am required to give considerable weight to the desire to preserve the special interest of heritage assets and their significance¹.
18. Paragraph 215 of the Framework sets out that where less substantial harm is identified, this should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. In this instance, the Appellant has not clearly articulated any public benefits they consider weigh in favour of the proposal. I note the observations made in respect of the proposed signage being an improvement on the situation in 2008 to 2020. However, I understand that this was for very different signage and not that currently at the site. As such, I do not find that the public benefits in this case does not outweigh the harm identified.
19. Accordingly, the proposal would conflict with Policies D3 and HC1 of the *London Plan (2021)*, and Policies DH1, DH3, DH(e), DH(f), DH(i) of the *Royal Greenwich Local Plan: Core Strategy with Detailed Policies (2014)* (as supported by the *Shop signs, Advertisements and Illumination in Greenwich Town Centre Design Guidance Note (2003)*), which, amongst other aims, seek to ensure that proposals respect the integrity of buildings and that proposals affecting heritage assets and their settings should conserve their significance.

¹ See Paragraph 212 of the Framework for example.

20. I note that the description used also refers to retention of awning and internally illuminated menu. The Council does not necessarily take issue with these aspects of the proposal. For similar reasons neither do I. However, the acceptability of these elements does not overcome or address the harms identified in respect of the scheme when considered as a whole.

Conclusion

21. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

C Parker

INSPECTOR