
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 September 2025 by K Hole BA (Hons)

Decision by Zoe Raygen DipURP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 December 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/X5990/Z/25/3369803

7 Paddington Street, London W1U 5QH

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Great Restaurant Project Limited against the decision of City of Westminster Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/02204/FULL.
 - The development is an openable shopfront onto Paddington Street.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and planning permission is granted for an openable shopfront onto Paddington Street at 7 Paddington Street, London W1U 5QH in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 25/02204/FULL, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with drawing nos. Site Location Plan, Block Plan, 100 P3 and 202 G.
 - 2) The doors of the shopfront hereby approved shall be kept closed except for between the hours of 12:00pm (noon) and 18:00pm daily from 1 April to 1 October inclusive each year.
 - 3) No music or amplified sound played in the premises shall be audible outside the premises at any time that the shopfront doors are open.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Preliminary Matters

3. The appeal evidence confirms that the development has been carried out, and I was able to see this on my site visit. I have therefore considered the appeal on this basis. Additionally, I have amended the description of development to remove reference to “retention” and “retrospective” as these do not constitute types of development.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is whether the development preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the Harley Street Conservation Area (HSCA).

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The HSCA includes most of the Howard de Walden Estate and features a high concentration of Georgian and Victorian buildings. Its significance derives from its historic buildings and architecture and their relationship to the street pattern. It is generally characterised by terraced townhouses set within a regular grid street layout. Nowadays, it retains a predominantly residential character however some parts have developed in different ways which has led to the creation of three distinct character areas. One of those is 'Marylebone High Street and its adjoining streets,' which is where the appeal site is located.
6. Marylebone High Street and its adjoining streets, is a primary commercial area and exhibits a different and more informal atmosphere compared to the rest of the HSCA. At ground floor level, most buildings are in retail and leisure uses with the street scene displaying an eclectic mix of shopfronts. These shopfronts present both traditional and modern designs which incorporate a variety of different colours and materials. This diversity contributes positively to the vibrant commercial character of this part of the HSCA.
7. The appeal site comprises red and yellow brick Victorian buildings with a restaurant covering the ground floor and basement, and residential accommodation above. The shopfront as installed, incorporates bi-folding timber doors with glazed panels that are capable of being opened. While the loss of a traditional shop front would be harmful, I am mindful of my statutory duties to assess whether the replacement preserves or enhances the HSCA.
8. At the time of my site visit, the awnings above the shopfront were lowered, and dining tables were set up on the front forecourt. The awnings and dining tables which, I understand are permitted under a separate planning permission and licence respectively, are prominent and add visual interest to the appeal site but this consequently results in the shopfront appearing subordinate to them.
9. Nonetheless, the design, colour and materials used on the shopfront are of high quality and relate well to the Victorian brick façades above. Furthermore, while not of traditional design, the shopfront complements the modern appearance of the awnings and assimilates well within the street scene given the diversity of other shopfronts nearby, reflecting the vibrant character of the area.
10. The Council has raised concerns that when the doors are open, there would be the appearance of a large, open void. As noted above, the prominence and visual interest of the awnings and tables would mitigate the loss of the shopfront while the doors are open. In any event, this would only be on a limited temporary basis when the restaurant is open and the weather permits. Consequently, the development does not materially harmfully affect the appearance of the property.
11. The development therefore preserves the character and appearance of the HSCA and accords with policies 38, 39 and 40 of the Westminster City Plan (2021). These policies seek development that positively contributes to the character and appearance of the existing area, adjacent buildings and heritage assets, which avoid harm to the significance of conservation areas and their settings and are sensitively designed having regard to among other things, character and materials.

Conditions

12. As the development has been carried out, it is not necessary to impose a condition relating to the standard time limit for commencement. However, it is necessary to impose a condition that requires the development to accord with the approved plans to provide certainty. I have also imposed conditions restricting the hours in which the doors may be open and prohibiting live or recorded music being played when they are open in the interests of living conditions of the neighbouring occupiers.

Conclusion and Recommendation

13. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be allowed.

K Hole

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

14. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and on that basis the appeal is allowed.

Zoe Raygen

INSPECTOR