
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 March 2026

by R Sabu BA(Hons), MA, BArch, PgDip, RIBA, ARB

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20 March 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/E5900/Z/25/3376172

Browns Restaurant, Unit A, 18 Hertsmere Road, London E14 4AY

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended) (Regulations) against a refusal to grant express consent.
 - The appeal is made by Mitchells & Butlers Retail Limited against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.
 - The application Ref is PA/25/01390.
 - The advertisement proposed is display of 2x halo illuminated fascia signs, 1x premium style halo illuminated letters, 10x vinyl logos internally applied, 1x new menu case free standing and 1x poster a board free standing.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed insofar as it relates to the display of 1x premium style halo illuminated letters and express consent is refused for 1x premium style halo illuminated letters.
2. The appeal is allowed insofar as it relates to the display of 2x halo illuminated fascia signs, 10x vinyl logos internally applied, 1x new menu case free standing and 1x poster a board free standing at Browns Restaurant, Unit A, 18 Hertsmere Road, London E14 4AY in accordance with the terms of the application Ref PA/25/01390, and express consent granted for its display. The consent is for five years from the date of this decision and is subject to the five standard conditions set out in the Regulations and the following additional condition:

The illumination of the approved signage shall not exceed 300 candelas per square metre. No intermittent or flashing lighting shall be used. No moving features, animations or exposed cold cathode tubing shall be displayed.

Preliminary Matters

3. I have taken the address from the appeal form in the header above in the interests of certainty.
4. The site lies within the West India Dock conservation area. Therefore, I have had regard to s72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 insofar as it relates to the consideration of amenity.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on visual amenity.

Reasons

6. The site lies at the end of the warehouse closest to the North Dock Footbridge that leads from Canary Wharf underground station and is in a prominent location along West India Quay Promenade. The area consists of historic warehouses fronting the docks. Although there are modern buildings on the opposing side of the docks, given the prominence of the historic warehouses on the same side as the site, the visual amenity of the area primarily consists of a pleasant historic industrial waterside character and appearance. In addition, the presence of restaurants and outdoor forecourts along the Promenade provides a lively feel to the area.
7. The appeal building is part of Warehouses and General Offices at Western End of North Quay, a Grade I listed building. It also lies within the West India Dock Conservation Area (WIDCA).
8. The appeal building dates to the early 1800s and was built as part of a nine-warehouse range, known as the West India Import Dock. The Dock was opened by the West India Dock Company to serve its rapidly expanding import and export business and was the first dock in London designed and built for trading. As a result of bombing during the Second World War, just two of the nine warehouses remain today. One of the two surviving warehouses, the eastern warehouse, was converted to create a mix of restaurants and shops, of which Browns Restaurant is one, with apartments above. Accordingly, the listed building has considerable historic interest in its role in the development of British trading in the nineteenth century.
9. The WIDCA encompasses the north-west corner of the former West India Docks, historically one of London's finest secure dock systems as stated in the West India Dock Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Guidelines. Therefore, the significance of the WIDCA, insofar as it is relevant to this appeal, lies in the evidence of dock architecture that played a significant role in British trading. The WIDCA has a pleasant historic industrial character and appearance.
10. The historic interest of the listed building contributes to its attractive historic character and provides a positive contribution to character and appearance of the area and WIDCA.
11. The Council does not object to the proposed 2 fascia signs, the vinyl logos, the menu case or poster board. Given their size and siting, I do not disagree. Accordingly, these elements of the proposal would not harm the visual amenity of the area.
12. Turning to the proposed premium style halo illuminated letters, these are proposed to be mounted on the pergola. This lettering would be sited near the front of the site, about 2.4m from ground level. The proposal would remove an existing large fascia sign on the building, and the proposed lettering on the pergola would be smaller than the fascia sign. I also note the presence of forecourt paraphernalia such as furniture and parasols which contribute to the lively character of the area.
13. However, the introduction of the illuminated sign away from the building and at high level would draw the eye away from the listed building, visually detracting from its historic character and adversely affecting the appearance of the area. Therefore, the removal of the existing fascia sign on the building would not compensate for the introduction of the illuminated pergola sign.

14. Halo illuminated lettering would be acceptable for the fascia signs on the building. However, given the prominent position of the pergola near the front of the site and in close proximity to West India Quay Promenade, the sign, in particular when illuminated at night, would result in the appearance of clutter at high level. Therefore, the proposed pergola sign would detract from the character and appearance of the listed building and its historic interest. Moreover, the lettering would fail to preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area.
15. For the foregoing reasons, I find that the premium style halo illuminated sign would detract from the pleasant character and appearance of the area and would harm the visual amenity of the area.
16. I have taken into account Policies D4 and HC1 of The London Plan The Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London March 2021 and Policies S.DH1, D.DH2, S.DH3 and D.DH10 of the Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031 Adopted January 2020 which together seek, among other things, to deliver good design, conserve the significance of heritage assets, reduce visual clutter in the public realm, and advertisements that complement the character, appearance and visual amenity of the site and the surrounding area. Given I have concluded that the proposal would harm amenity, the proposed premium style halo illuminated letters would conflict with these policies.

Other Matters

17. The Council has not objected to the proposal with respect to public safety. From the evidence before me I see no reason to disagree.
18. Listed building consent may be required for the elements of the proposal for which express consent is granted.

Conditions

19. A condition relating to the intensity of illumination of the signs is necessary to safeguard the visual amenity of the area.

Conclusion

20. For the reasons given above the appeal should be allowed in part and dismissed in part.

R Sabu

INSPECTOR