



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 31 August 2023 by R Dickson BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

Decision by John Morrison BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20 October 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/X5210/Z/23/3324417

Koko, 1A Camden High Street, Camden, London NW1 7JE

- 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 Hope Lease Ltd against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Camden.
 - The application Ref 2022/1124/A, dated 18 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 25 April 2023.
 - The advertisement proposed is described as "installation of advertisements on Camden High Street, Bayham Place, Bayham Street and Crowndale Road elevations."
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and express consent is granted for the "installation of advertisements on Camden High Street, Bayham Place, Bayham Street and Crowndale Road elevations" as applied for at Koko, 1A Camden High Street, Camden, London NW1 7JE in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 2022/1124/A, dated 18 March 2022. 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:
 - 1) The advertisement shall display only two-dimensional static images, shall contain no moving images, animation, video or full motion images and no messaging shall spread across more than one screen image. The advertisement display shall not change more frequently than every 10 seconds and the rate of change shall be instantaneous.

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 description of development is taken from the decision notice as this best reflects the scheme at appeal and has been used in the absence of a sufficiently detailed one elsewhere. The Council issued a split decision, refusing consent for advertisements 1, 4, 5 and 6a on Camden High Street and Crowndale Road. The decision appealed is only for the refusal of these advertisements. They appear to be in situ and installed according to the plans provided. I have considered them accordingly.

Main Issue

4. The effect of the proposed advertisements on the visual amenity of the area with specific regard to the Camden Town Conservation Area (CA) and a grade II listed building.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The CA is an active commercial and retail area, with a traditional wide shopping street. The Mornington Crescent junction is busy with both pedestrians and road users. There is a mix of architectural styles, representing the past two hundred years. Koko, the appeal site, is a grade II listed focal building owing to its location on the junction. It is described in the CA appraisal as having a fussy post-modern appearance. The site is currently used as a music venue, and as such the main parties agree that the principle of signage is acceptable subject to appropriate design.
6. The main advertisement, 'sign 1', is the most prominent on the front of the building. It is in front of some of the windows, however their shape and style are still legible. While the trough lighting adds a degree of extra clutter, it does not appear jarring on the exterior during daylight hours, partly owing to the matching colour, and that the column finials and detailing are still clear above and below the advertisement.
7. Advertisements 4 and 5 display the name of the venue and have digital poster displays for upcoming events. While the Council notes that the purpose of these are unknown, when viewing the venue from the pavement outside, 'sign 1' higher up on the building is not visible due to the canopy, therefore advertisements 4 and 5 would be necessary for pedestrians passing near to the building. The style and placement of these advertisements appear in-keeping with both the current and historical use of the building and do not appear, individually or collectively, overbearing on the façade.
8. During the site visit the digital posters ('sign 5') were displaying moving graphics and videos. Given that the posters are near to a busy junction, they would be more appropriate with a static display in order to ensure public safety is maintained. A condition to ensure that the display does not change more than once every ten seconds, which is standard practice when displaying internally illuminated digital displays near to the highway, would therefore be reasonable.
9. The displays on the side of the building, facing Crowndale Road, are paper posters with LED strip lights around the perimeter. This appears to have been confused in the officer report with an LED screen display. The size and location of the advertisements on this side of the building are in keeping with both the current and historical use of the building.
10. Taking the above into account, the advertisements are consistent with those expected on a former theatre and the current leisure use of the building. They thus ensure the significance of the grade II listed building would not be harmed and both the character and appearance of the CA, by association, would be preserved. As such, they do not harm visual amenity. I have taken into account, as far as they are material considerations to the main issue, Policies D1, D2 and D4 of the London Borough of Camden Local Plan 2017, which collectively seek to ensure that advertisements, and the design of them are

acceptable in a heritage context. Given I have concluded that the proposal would not harm visual amenity, the proposal does not conflict with these Policies.

Conclusion and Recommendation

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

R Dickson

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

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

John Morrison

INSPECTOR