

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

This Design and Access Statement is submitted to accompany an application for express advert consent for a temporary 'scaffold shroud' screen advertisement at the Camden Eye, 2 Kentish Town Road, London NW1 during works to the building exterior.

The statement describes the proposal and provides an assessment to accompany the associated express consent application made in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007

THE SITE

The application site, comprises the 'Camden Eye' PH, situated at the corner of Kentish Town Road and Camden Road in Camden Town.

Located at the intersection of these two roads the building is 3 storeys comprising a public house on the ground floor and first floor with storage areas on the second floor.

The site is located within the Camden Town conservation area.

However, this part of Camden Town is a vibrant area of generally commercial character creating a lively cosmopolitan scene.

THE PROPOSAL

The owner needs to carry out repairs to the building and improvements to the roof area (granted under application 2013/0632/P) which necessitates the front façade to be scaffolded for a temporary period of approximately 12 months.

The application proposal is for a temporary scaffold shroud screen advertisement (printed on lightweight pvc) around the scaffolding stretching along the Kentish Town Road and Camden Road frontages. This would encompass a coloured image of the original building façade.

In order to fund the project, there would be displayed at intervals a commercial advertisement inset into the shroud, comprised of simple graphics. When no commercial advertisement is needed a full 1:1 coloured image of the building façade will be displayed.

The proposal is an alternative to standard scaffold sheeting and netting which can often look scruffy and unkempt, to add some visual interest and screening during the period of the scaffolding.

The period of consent applied for is a 12 month temporary period.

The size of the commercial advertisement area is 7m x 7m.

The proposed screen will be manufactured from digitally imprinted micromesh pvc material. The material is rip and tear proof and has been tested and approved for large scale display applications. The material has been specially designed and manufactured for use as a building and scaffold safety screen.

There will be external lighting above by way of spotlighting from below. The area, however, is well lit and the brightness levels are within normally accepted guidelines of the Institute of lighting Engineers technical report for such a 'lit zone'.

RELEVANT HISTORY

Building works to the building were recently approved under application 2013/0632/P.

Previous application (ref 2013/1287/A) for a 'scaffold shroud' advertisement incorporating an inset commercial advertising area approx. 9m x 5.5m was refused by notice dated 13 June 2013 on grounds of amenity.

THE MAIN ISSUES

Amenity is the main issue and whether the proposed advertisement, as part of a temporary scaffold shroud, would have a detrimental impact on visual amenity for such a temporary period whilst the site would otherwise be scaffolded and during which time the normal amenity of the site would itself be lowered.

It may not be suitable as a permanent feature in the street scene, but this does not form part of the application. Instead the advertisement would appear in association with a scaffold shroud during the course of building work.

'Scaffold screen advertisements' were first introduced in the 1990s in European capital cities such as Milan to help raise funds for building improvements, often to historic buildings, which could not be generated from normal funding sources, and thus play a part in urban restoration. Improvements in printing techniques coupled with professional installation have added to the acceptability of such shrouds as a temporary alternative to ugly scaffolding and polythene sheeting, and in lively commercial area can contribute to a vibrant modern and successful city whilst building work is underway.

DCLG circular 03/2007 (para 154 to Annex) recognises the potential for such displays as temporary features on shrouds in such circumstances.

With scaffolding and a safety screen erected, the facades of the old building would effectively be obscured, and hence any visual significance in the street scene would be lost. The colourful images proposed would have the obvious visual benefit over more traditional plastic sheeting or netting of retaining colour and interest during the course of the works.

During the building works period the amenity of this site and appearance would be temporarily lowered. The 'scaffold shroud' would keep the façade of the building alive during building operations coving the façade with scaffold.

DCLG circular 03/2007, Appendix E to Annex, advises a decision maker to consider any positive (as well as negative) aspects associated with such advert proposals when it states,

'In applying the expression "in the interests of amenity" to any particular application or appeal, account should be taken not only of factors which may be detrimental to amenity but also of factors

which may be to the advantage of the amenity of a locality, such as adding appropriate colour and interest to a drab area, or screening an eyesore.'

The proposal will provide short term colour and interest into a lively street scene.

Even where architectural or listed buildings are involved, any positive contribution that the building normally makes to the street scene will be negated as its façade will be hidden away behind scaffold and sheeting such that it will not be on public view whilst building works are underway. The appearance and amenity of the site, as a consequence of scaffolding and obvious building works, will be much lower than normal. Short term scaffold shroud screens can retain some dynamic colour and interest, especially in vibrant areas such as this.

DCLG circular 03/2007, in para 154, '**Shrouds and large wrap advertisements**' gives recognition to this form of advertising when it states,

'Buildings which are being renovated or undergoing major structural work and which have scaffolding and netting around them may be potential temporary sites for shroud advertisements or large wrap advertisements covering the face, or most of the face, of the building. In all cases express consent will be required for these advertisements which can remain in place until the scaffolding or netting is removed. These advertisements should be considered on a site specific basis taking account of amenity and public safety issues.'

The commercial advertisement would be designed into a larger shroud covering the scaffolding. It would be limited contextually to the busy shopping street environs.

Whilst the site is within the Camden Town conservation area this is principally of a vibrant commercial character and users of the street would see a shroud adding dynamic visual interest in preference to a normal building site view and scaffolding. For a temporary short term period with no permanent damage to the fabric, character or appearance of the conservation area in this cosmopolitan environs I do not believe there should be a compelling amenity objection.

Any concerns that the LPA may have that allowing this proposal would set a precedent leading to an increasing incidence of similar proposals must be set against the fact that it is an established planning principle that each case must be considered on its individual merits. This is confirmed in relation to this type of proposal by DCLG circular 03/2007, para 154, where it advises that each case must be considered on a site specific basis.

There have, however, been a number of scaffold shroud projects implemented recently nearby within the Camden Town conservation area.

187 Camden High Street

Appeal consent (ref 08/2091485) granted on 30 March 2009, for a temporary 'scaffold shroud' advertisement for a 12 month period following the council refusal of application ref 2008/4116/A.

The shroud displayed an image of the refurbished building with a wrap around corner advert measuring 14m x 9m. The advertisement took up roughly half the shroud area.

The council considered the advertisement to be out of scale. The appeal Inspector took the view that this would be a very large advertisement and a case could be made for making it smaller. However, in his view it was not so large as to be detrimental to the visual amenity of the locale. That this was a vibrant bustling commercial area and the shroud would form an acceptable temporary addition to the townscape. He stated,

“Given the need for a safety shroud, I believe that the proposed sign would be an improvement on the otherwise utilitarian vista, bringing colour and interest to the townscape whilst refurbishment work is being undertaken. For the duration of the refurbishment the sign would preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area as a whole.”

Appeal consent (ref 10/2139181) granted on 10 February 2011, for a temporary ‘scaffold shroud advertisement’ measuring 12m x 8m for a 12 month period following the council refusal of application 2010/4028A.

The Inspectors report concluded that,

“So long as the display of the advertisement is viewed as temporary, for the duration of the refurbishment works, then it is a livelier alternative to the shrouded scaffolding. But as soon as works to the building have been completed, and the scaffolding and shroud can for practical purposes be removed, then the advertisement becomes an inappropriate and unacceptable feature in the conservation area townscape. I conclude that despite the harm to the character and appearance of the Camden town conservation area and the conflict with Core Strategy policy CS14 and development policy DP25, the advertisement remains an acceptable feature while building works are in progress.”

174 Camden High Street

LPA consent (ref 2011/1728/A) granted consent on 28 June 2011 for a temporary ‘scaffold shroud’ advertisement measuring approx. 7m x 7m for a 12 month period.

The site was within the Camden Town Conservation Area.

The officers report noted that the advertisement would be highly visible but that the councils policy on shrouds did allow them in commercial area and it would be unreasonable to refuse the temporary proposal whilst the site was scaffolded.

11-13 Camden High Street

LPA consent (ref 2011/2568/A) granted consent on 14 July 2011 for a temporary ‘scaffold shroud’ advertisement measuring approx. 12m x 10m for a 6 month period.

The site was within the Camden Town Conservation Area.

CAMDEN COUNCIL GUIDANCE FOR SCAFFOLD SHROUD ADVERTISEMENTS

The above examples of consents granted for 'scaffold shroud' advertisements in the immediate vicinity of the application site, and all within the Camden Town conservation area is an indication that the conservation area status is not an in principle bar to this form of short term advertisement.

Camden Planning Guidance 2011 does state as follows in relation to *shroud advertisements*,

"In some highly sensitive locations or where the building plays a particularly important role in the appearance of the area, a visual representation of the building that is shrouded may be considered necessary to mitigate any harm to the appearance of the area."

This requirement forms part of the proposal.

Whilst the guidance also limits the percentage area of the total shroud which can be devoted to commercial advertising (20% normally but 10% in conservation areas) this is not always possible, and it is considered the proposal represents a good balance between the two elements, and that the area devoted to commercial advertising fits in with the architecture of the 1:1 element.

CONCLUSION

During the period of visual disruption caused by the building process and scaffold, it is considered that the shrouding of the site, in particular as it would be for a limited period only, would be of benefit to the amenity of the conservation area.

In my view the shroud would be seen as an acceptable part of the streetscape for the short duration of the works and a more positive solution compared to the alternative of blank and often scruffy scaffolding.

The relationship of the commercial advertising area to the architectural features of the existing building shown on the remainder of the shroud is good.