

<b>Address:</b>	<b>287 Camden High Street London NW1 7BX</b>	
<b>Application Number:</b>	2009/2560/P & 2009/2562/A	<b>Officer: John Sheehy</b>
<b>Ward:</b>	Camden Town with Primrose Hill	
<b>Date Received:</b>	<b>27/05/2009</b>	
<b>Proposal: Retention of metal recladding to the front of the building and an externally illuminated sign to cover the entire front elevation of the existing shop.</b>		
<b>Drawing Numbers: 1807 E100; C401 F; C401.1 F; C401.2 G; C408 "Shopfront fascia" and "Pekmet details"; C408 "Shopfront elevation", ground and first floor shopfront plan, sections BB and AA and "Pekmet details".</b>		
<b>RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY: Refuse and serve an enforcement notice</b>		
<b>Applicant:</b>	<b>Agent:</b>	
Allsaints Retail Ltd Jack's Place, 6 Corbet Place, Spitafield, London, E1 6NN	Miss Pamela Brinkworth 6 Ellsworth Street, Bethnal Green, London, E2 0AX	

## ANALYSIS INFORMATION

Land Use Details:			
	Use Class	Use Description	Floorspace
Existing	A1 Shop		370m <sup>2</sup>
Proposed	A1 Shop		370m <sup>2</sup>

## OFFICERS' REPORT

**Reason for Referral to Committee:** The current scheme of delegation does not cover the issue of an enforcement notice for this breach of control.

### 1. SITE

- 1.1 The application relates to a building located on the western side of Camden High Street adjacent to the Hampstead Road Bridge.
- 1.2 The site is located at the northern end of a terrace of three-storey properties and is part of a site which stretches to the rear and rises to 4 storeys with a curved north-facing frontage onto Hampstead Road Lock. While the frontage onto Camden High Street is of the same height as the remainder of the terrace, it is not similar in design or architectural treatment. The site has a curved frontage onto Camden High Street which is approximately three times the width of the other frontage buildings on the terrace.

1.3 The application building is highly visible because of its prominent location on Camden High Street being adjacent to the relatively open Hampstead Road Lock and the Hampstead Road Bridge and due to its location as the end-terrace building on the busy High Street.

1.4 The building is unlisted and not located within a conservation area. It is situated adjacent to the Regents Canal Conservation Area and the grade II listed lock keepers cottage which is set back from the Camden High Street frontage.

## 2. THE PROPOSAL

2.1 Retention of metal recladding to the front of the building and an externally illuminated sign to cover the entire front elevation of the existing shop.

2.2 The metal cladding occupies the entire height of the three-storey building. The signage consists of a residual image within the metal cladding of the skull of a goat set within a circle. The doors to the shop are sliding double doors. The door frame houses spotlights which point upwards to illuminate the sign on the façade of the building.

2.3 There are no windows to the shopfront and the door does not contain any glazed elements.

## 3. RELEVANT HISTORY

### 3.1 Original Permission for the wider development

**March 1999** Planning permission granted for redevelopment of the eastern part of the site by the erection of a four-storey building to accommodate class A3 (food and drink) on the ground floor, class A1 (retail) on part of the ground and first floors, class B1 (business purposes) on the upper floors. Use of the former lock-keeper's cottage as a canal information centre, ref. PE9700702R3.

### 3.2 Planning history relating to the works under consideration

**September 2008** Application for alterations to shopfront including the removal of existing full height glazed fascia and replacement with steel cladding to entire front facade and new steel framed door with timber panelling withdrawn by the applicant, ref. 2008/2709/P.

3.3 **February 2009** Enforcement investigation opened into unauthorised recladding of the building and display of signage, ref. EN09/0051.

## 4. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 Site Notice displayed from 24<sup>th</sup> July to 14<sup>th</sup> August.

- 4.2 Residential occupier of 20 Oval Road objected in a personal capacity as a local resident and as a member of both the Regents Network and London Waterways Commission and has provided the following comments:
- 4.3 “I am very concerned about the negative effect the external appearance of the 287 Camden High Street has on the locality. The unauthorised reconstruction of the shop frontage of 287 is very ugly, sinister and totally out of place. The northern end of Camden High Street has become a shambles of inappropriate treatment of building frontages, and out of control, and 287 has taken things to extremes of bad taste and unsuitable style in the context of our local High Street. It is not just the character of our High Street that has been upset, the property abuts an important conservation area for which it has had no regard. The Regents Canal Conservation Area based around the historic and picturesque waterway must be taken into account, and any buildings or constructions alongside the canal must be suitable and in keeping with the character and appearance of a key section of our national canal network. This solid and unrelenting rusty steel shop frontage is out of place on the Regents Canal.
- 4.4 The site is only a few metres from a Grade II Listed historic road bridge, still in daily use. However, it seems that the applicant is determined to overbear and outdo anything else in the locality including the historic bridge.
- 4.5 It is a great pity that the frontage of 287 also dominates the listed Lock-keepers Cottage nearby, which is already disadvantaged by the surrounding developments”.

## 5. **POLICIES**

### 5.1 **Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006**

SD1D Community Safety  
SD6 Amenity for Occupiers and Neighbours  
B1 General Design Principles  
B3 Alterations and Extensions  
B4 Shop fronts, advertisements and signs  
B7 Conservation Areas

### 5.2 **Other Relevant Planning Policies**

**Camden Planning Guidance (2006)**

## 6. **ASSESSMENT**

### Local Context

- 6.1 The prominent location of the site merits careful design consideration for any alterations to the building. However, it is important to note that while the building is highly visible, this location is not considered a landmark site. Therefore the building’s bulk, design and choice of materials must be carefully assessed so as to fit within its surrounding area, not detract from or be overly prominent within the street scene.

- 6.2 While the High Street in Camden can be described as eclectic and interesting because of the uniquely decorated facades of individual buildings, these features do not compete with the scale and general rhythm of development.
- 6.3 The pattern of development is of traditional 19<sup>th</sup> century terrace buildings of 3 or 4 storeys, with shop fronts at ground level and windows above ordered in a typical fashion for buildings of their period. The shop fronts at ground floor and the rhythm of windows at higher levels ensure the development is of a human scale and inviting, and also providing a consistency to the street scene.
- 6.4 The individual buildings retain their individuality through the unique treatment of facades. However, this individuality does not detract from the general scale of the street or challenge for prominence because the scale and pattern of the street is kept generally consistent.

#### Scheme which it is proposed to retain

- 6.5 The building at 287 Camden High Street with its already implemented shop front scheme challenges other buildings along the street for prominence because of its design and materials. The design does not respect the scale or rhythm of development along the High Street.
- 6.6 While the height of the existing building is the same as its adjoining neighbours, the lack of division of floors (externally), non-existent windows and triple height expanse of the cladding, give the illusion that it is taller than neighbouring properties. This creates an overbearing, unfriendly, hostile and out of scale development.
- 6.7 The recladding is not a considered design within its immediate context. It has an industrial feel to it because of its details such as rivets, steel and exposed fixings similar to a gas holder. Considered appropriate in another location where robust industrial architecture reflects that land use, this scheme is ill fitting within its context. The use of the materials and the triple height blank façade void of windows or openings are not characteristic of shop fronts in the area. Further, the solid double height shop front combined with the chosen materials, exacerbate its size and result in an unwelcoming appearance both along that side of the street and also down to the lock keepers cottage.
- 6.8 The shop front provides a blank inactive frontage which does not enliven the street. No views inside the shop unit are afforded via a display window as would be the case with a conventional shopfront. The shopfront is considered to be out of character with the commercial nature of the street and with the surrounding area.

#### Amenity

- 6.9 There would be no loss of amenity to neighbouring occupiers by virtue of loss of sunlight, daylight, privacy or other disturbance and therefore the proposal is considered to be consistent with UDP policy SD6. However the design of the shop

front does not comply with policy SD1D relating to community safety. It creates a hostile frontage that fails to contribute towards a secure safe environment.

## **CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 By virtue of the design and materials used the alterations to 287 Camden High Street are not considered appropriate. While the cladding may be acceptable in another location, the proposal is not a considered design which relates to its immediate surroundings. The result is visually incongruous, out of scale with the rest of the High Street, and harmful to its surroundings. The scheme is contrary to UDP Policies SD1D, B1, B3, B4 and B7.
- 7.2 As the signage is part of the metal cladding it is not necessary to pursue an advertisement prosecution. Compliance with the enforcement notice would ensure the removal of the sign.
- 8.1 **Recommendation:** Refuse permission to retain the alterations and signage and that the Head of Legal Services be instructed to issue an **Enforcement Notice** under Section 172 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended, and officers be authorised in the event of non-compliance, to commence legal proceedings under Section 179 or other appropriate power and/or take direct action under Section 178 in order to secure the cessation of the breach of planning control.
- 8.2 **The Notice shall allege the following breach of planning control:** recladding of the front of the building to cover the entire front elevation of the existing shop.
- 8.3 The Notice shall require that within a period of 3 months of the Notice taking effect the recladding should be removed.
- 8.4 **REASONS WHY THE COUNCIL CONSIDER IT EXPEDIENT TO ISSUE THE NOTICE.**
- 8.5 The development by reason of its materials, form, height and lack of fenestration results in an overbearing, hostile design which is out of character with the surrounding area. It fails to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the adjoining Regents Canal Conservation Area. This is contrary to policies SD1D (Community safety), B1 (General Design Principles), B3 (Alterations and Extensions), B4 (Shopfronts) and B7 (Conservation Areas [setting]) of the London Borough of Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006.
- 8.6 The alterations to the building have been carried out within the last 4 years and it is therefore expedient to pursue enforcement action.
9. **LEGAL COMMENTS**
- 9.1 Members are referred to the note from the Legal Division at the start of the Agenda.

