

APPENDIX 1

STATEMENT OF CASE – REFUSAL OF PLANNING PERMISSION TO INSTALLATION OF ROLLER SHUTTERS AT GROUND FLOOR LEVEL OF THE HENSON BUILDING. APPLICATION REF: 2013/7390/P

WRITTEN REPRESENTATION BY JKR LTD – 4 AUGUST 2014

BACKGROUND

1. Security shutters were erected in response to 3 violent burglaries that took place not long after we moved into the building. All three were committed by a number of people, approaching the building on motorbikes, showing no regard for anyone in the vicinity of the building. They smashed through the existing doors and windows in seconds, completely unconcerned with the lighting and security cameras and despite the presence of security guards on site. On one occasion the intruders threatened one resident and a security guard.
2. The police advised us at the time that the only way to put off these people was to install a solid shutter (with perforations). They would then move on to easier targets. We quickly took the advice of the police and with the encouragement and permission from our landlords, arranged for galvanized, perforated shutters to be installed.
3. On all external glass walls & windows, 18 shutters were installed internally. No planning permission needed for this.
4. On the exterior front, 2 shutters were fitted. This was done externally as the internal glass vestibule & automatic doors & Reception layout made it impossible to fit internally.
5. The glass windows/walls installed in the building are triple-glazed and maximum security toughend and laminated glass was used, as per Camden's recommendations for standards on new commercial properties. This did not stop the thieves breaking through these windows in a matter of seconds.
6. We used an expert shutter company and their advice was that to ensure we secured the building properly, the galvanized perforated shutters are top of the range. As the safety of our staff, the residents in the flats above and passers by was paramount, we decided to go with the best product and make the design and style fit in as carefully and closely as possible to the surroundings.
7. Our insurers also recommended this type of shutter as the one they prefer to see on buildings they are insuring as the track record of this type of security shutter is outstanding.

8. This style of shutter is in use externally on the building, on the ground floor windows along the canal towpath. There are 5 of these shutters and we matched the style as planning permission was given for these in 2009 and we followed the same colour and style.

REFUSAL REASONS BY CAMDEN COUNCIL

"Roller shutters, by reason of their location, design and external appearance, are an incongruous addition to the building, detrimental to the character and appearance of the building and the wider Regents Canal Conservation Area. The shutters contrary to the Camden policies to promote high quality places, conserving heritage, are not 'high quality design'.

JKR'S STATEMENT OF CASE RESPONSE:

A good deal of care and attention was given to the design of the exterior shutters before they were installed and consideration was given to take into account the following points:

- The two new shutters were designed and installed to be matching and in keeping with the existing roller shutters on the building. The 5 existing exterior roller shutters, protecting the exterior doors on the canal side towpath, attach to the building and are exactly the same in design and style as the ones we have recently installed. (APPENDIX 1A). These shutters were installed in 2009 when the building was initially refurbished and Camden approved the entire design and refurbishment scheme & presumably were considered 'high quality design' by Camden at that point. There is much more human traffic along the towpath, than in front of the main entrance to the building.
- There have been 5 objections from 5 out of the 72 households in the flats above the commercial floors. All 5 objectors have a problem with the look of the shutters when they are down and in use. All state that it gives a 'warehouse' feel to the property. The building is in fact a converted warehouse, so it has a warehouse feel anyway, so the irony of this has not escaped us. No one has objected to us in person since the day of installation, so we believe they are used to it now.
- A further concern was that the shutters would attract Graffiti. The shutters have been in use for 10 months and not one piece of graffiti has been seen. We would not want any graffiti to spoil the appearance of the shutters and would endeavor to implement a 'best practice' should it happen, and

have the offending graffiti removed within an hour of the office re-opening.

- We are aware of the feelings of these 5 people, and have restricted the use of the shutters to the minimum. We have no wish to upset our neighbours, but the seriousness of the security situation has forced us to take these steps.
- The objectors may not have been aware at the time of their objection that these shutters would be used at night and Sundays only, perhaps thinking they would be in use all the time.
- The main objection to the shutters is when they are in use. The shutters are brought down and in use Monday-Friday 2330hrs – 0700hrs and Saturday 1700hrs through Sunday and opened again on Monday at 0700hrs. The shutters are not used during the normal working hours of the business which is Monday-Friday 0700hrs-2330hrs and on Saturdays, 0900hrs-1700hrs.
- We believe that the use of the shutters during the night and on Sundays is minimal and does not detract from the look of the building (APPENDIX 3A).
- The Reception behind the shutters is lit at night and looks very attractive, even with the shutters in use (APPENDIX 2A).
- The casing holding the roller shutter when not in use, is exactly the same colour, material, size as the 5 giant support struts holding up the front of the building. The modern look for the front of the building works extremely well with the old brickwork and cobbles and is a stylish compliment to the building. (APPENDIX 4A & 5A)
- When looking at the frontage, the balconies and exterior metal-and-glass balconies match the design style of the support struts and enhance the blend of old and new in The Henson style. (APPENDIX 4A).
- Modern styling has complimented the original design, heritage and most definitely meets the criteria of 'high quality design'.
- The wooden canopy obscures the shutter housing, so you simply don't notice it when passing or approaching the building. The fact that the shutters are set back from the pavement and road traffic passing (minimal as this is a dead-end) means the visual impact is significantly reduced.
- The perforations in the shutters allow an ambient light through the shutters, revealing the stylish and modern interior inside. This was a deliberate attempt to play down the 'roller shutter look' that affects most of the other solid shutters in Camden.
- Through the use of the perforations, not only is an attractive ambient light visible, but natural surveillance is achieved for any security staff inside the building. It also allows potential

burglars to see that the building is occupied (by security staff).

- The installation was done with the full support of our landlords (see letter of support attached to original application to the LPA). The landlords would not want to do anything to take away the heritage and overall impression of the building and they are fully supportive of the shutters as they have been installed. (see supporting letter with original application).
- These specific shutters are recommended by the Metropolitan Police as the most effective deterrent to break-ins. The chain type shutters that the Camden Planners have suggested as having a more pleasing look, ('brick bond') are less secure than the solid, perforated and we can cite many examples of burglars getting through these as the flexibility in these allows a person on each side of the shutter to pull them out of the guide rails, rendering them useless. The LPA have not taken into account any security issues and in fact, since the shutters were installed we have not had any further burglaries or trouble of any kind.

CONCLUSION

We do feel that there is a strong case to be made for giving permission for these shutters to remain in place. Given the fact that the shutters are in use for relatively short periods of time at night and on a Sunday, we believe that the initial concerns of the 5 residents are not valid. The shutters have been sympathetically designed and were specifically chosen to match the 5 existing shutters on the building, as these had previously been passed by the LPA. There are many more pedestrians walking past these on the towpath than past the front at any time of the day or night. We have used the highest quality materials and have been considered and designed to fit in with the look and feel of the building. This, along with the necessary security measures that needed to be taken, have prevented a recurrence of the violent, dangerous and disruptive burglaries that took place last year. Since the installation of these discreet shutters, there has been no repeat of the burglaries or offences, the office is no longer the attraction for burglars that it was without security shutters. The setback nature of the glazed frontage under the building canopy means that the shutters are unobtrusive and barely noticeable and are doing not only an excellent job of securing the building, but of not drawing unwanted attention to the building.

Katie Lane, Jkr Ltd, August 2014