

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 July 2016

by C J Ford BA (Hons) BTP Dist. MRTPI

a person appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 20 July 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/X5210/Z/16/3149939

28 Denmark Street, Camden, London WC2H 8NJ

- 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 Mr Richard Metcalfe (*sic*) (Consolidated Group) against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Camden.
 - The application Ref 2016/0523/A, dated 1 February 2016, was refused by notice dated 8 April 2016.
 - The advertisement proposed is temporary display of shroud advertisement with 1 x non illuminated advertisement on Denmark Street elevation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The appellant's surname in the header above is taken from the original application form. There is an evident typographical error with the appeal form referring instead to 'Metcalfe'.
3. Consent is sought for a temporary period from 1 April 2016 to 1 April 2018 whilst works to the buildings on the site are undertaken. At the time of the site visit, no scaffolding or associated shroud was in place on the Denmark Street elevation.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

5. The site is located within the Denmark Street Conservation Area (CA). Consequently, in determining the appeal, it is necessary to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA.
6. The Council's Denmark Street Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy 2010 notes that since the latter part of the 20th century Denmark Street has been a renowned centre of popular music retailing. This special interest is in addition to the historic street pattern which has an intimate character and a built form which has a consistency of scale.

7. Advertisements in Denmark Street are predominantly ground floor shop front signage. Whilst there is a small number of high level projecting signs, large scale hoardings are not a typical feature of the street scene.
8. The proposal is the erection of a scaffold shroud with 1:1 images of Nos 20 to 28 Denmark Street. The proposed shroud would be 66.7m wide and 18m high (1,201m²). It would have an inset non-illuminated advertisement that would be 8m wide and 10m high (80m²). The latter would amount to 6.7% coverage which complies with the Camden Planning Guidance 'Design' (CPG1) July 2015. It specifies that where shroud and banner advertisements are considered acceptable in conservation areas, the advertisements should not cover more than 10% of each elevation.
9. Nevertheless, CPG1 is guidance and the Council is correct to emphasise that the sensitivity of a location must be taken into consideration. Indeed, CPG1 goes on to state that the location of the advertisement on the shroud will depend on the character of the local built form and the nature of views within it.
10. The proposed advertisement would directly face the Grade I listed Church of St Giles-in-the-Fields. Excluding its tower, the classically styled church is of a fairly modest height. The proposed advertisement would extend from the first to the third floor of 28 Denmark Street. Owing to its size, particularly its height, it would appear unduly dominant when viewed alongside the church and be harmful to its setting.
11. Furthermore, although the advertisement would comply with the percentage figure specified in CPG1, it is mainly due to the extensive width of the shroud, with its horizontal emphasis. The proposed advertisement would be located at one end of the shroud and have a vertical emphasis. Consequently, there would be little sense of balance in its positioning and it would unduly dominate the north-eastern end of the shroud. The sense of imbalance and undue dominance would be visually exacerbated by the advertisement projecting above the height of the images of the facades to Nos 26 and 27 Denmark Street.
12. The appellant makes it clear that the alternative to the proposal is plain grey scaffold sheeting. The proposed 1:1 images of the buildings and the advert would provide greater visual interest than plain sheeting. However, that benefit would not outweigh the proposed advertisement appearing as an unduly dominant and jarring feature that is significantly at odds with the character of the area. Moreover, the identified harmful impact would not be sufficiently offset by the temporary nature of the proposal or the adverse affects of the major development taking place in the immediate area.
13. It is understood that consent was previously given for a shroud with an advertisement in a similar position (Council Ref: 2014/6754/A). However, that scheme is not directly comparable because the advertisement was substantially smaller at 6m high and 6m wide (36m²). The appeal proposal has been judged on its own merits.
14. The Council has drawn attention to Development Plan policies which they consider are pertinent to this appeal. In particular, it is noted that Policy CS14 of Camden's Core Strategy 2010 seeks to preserve and enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas and

listed buildings. The policies have been taken into account, so far as they are material.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above, the proposal would have an unacceptably harmful effect on the visual amenity of the area. It would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA and would be harmful to the setting of the Grade I listed Church of St Giles-in-the-Fields. It would conflict with relevant policies. It is therefore concluded that the appeal should be dismissed.

C J Ford

APPOINTED PERSON