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Our Ref: 2015/5393/L
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Nick Holmes,
The Planning Inspectorate
3/14
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Bristol, BS1 6PN

Dear Mr Holmes,

Appeal Site

Kings Cross Railways Station, N1 9AP

Appeal by

Network Rail Infrastructure Ltd

Proposal: Installation of two advertising screens on to the existing main customer information screens within the station concourse.

I write in connection with the appeal

1.0 Summary

1.1 This is an important site. Kings Cross is a intensely used amd visited grade I listed building. It is also located with the Kings Cross St pancras Conservation Area.

1.2 The appeal arises from the refusal of listed building consent 2015/5393/L on 27/01/2016 for the 'Installation of two advertising screens on to the existing main customer information screens within the station concourse'

1.3 It was refused on the following reason:

The proposed advertising screens, by reason of their location, size, design and dynamic illumination would be harmful to the special architectural and historic interest of the grade I listed building (Western Range), contrary to policy CS14

(Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage) of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Core Strategy, and policy DP25 (Conserving Camden's heritage) of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Development Policies.

The station has been recently been part refurbished and part redeveloped. It is noted that during the refurbishment and redevelopment of the station, the signage, and particularly the advertising panels adjacent to the information screens, was discussed in detail. It was considered very important that a gap was retained which allowed some visual connection between the new Western Concourse and the Listed Grade I elevation of the Western Range of the station. The consented design of the information screens, including the advertising panels at either end, was considered to be the maximum size appropriate which still allowed views of the historic building behind, all be it limited.

Any further encroachment of the signage across the views of the historic building, as is proposed, is considered to be unacceptable, harming the significance and the setting of the listed building by losing the visual connection between the concourse and the Western Range. The size, location and design of the screens would be harmful to the listed building and contrary to policy.

1.4 The Council's case is largely set out in the officer's delegated report which details the site and surroundings, the site history and an assessment of the proposal. A copy of the report was sent with the questionnaire.

1.5 In addition to the information sent with the questionnaire, I would be pleased if the Inspector could take into account the following information and comments before deciding the appeal.

2.0 Status of Policies and Guidance

2.1 In arriving at its current decision the London Borough of Camden has had regard to the relevant legislation, government guidance, statutory development plans and the particular circumstances of the case.

2.2 With reference to the National Planning Policy Framework 2012, policies and guidance contained within Camden's LDF 2010 are up to date and fully accord and should therefore be given substantial weight in the decision of this appeal. The National Planning Policy Framework was adopted in April 2012 and states that development should be refused if the proposed development conflicts with the local plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

2.3 Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 imposes a statutory duty upon local planning authorities to consider the impact of proposals on conservation areas. It requires that 'special attention be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.'

2.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's policies for decision making on development proposals. At the heart of the

framework is a presumption in favour of 'sustainable development'. Conserving heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance forms one of the 12 core principles that define sustainable development. Specific policies relevant to the current application include paragraph 133 and 134, which discuss proposals that are considered to cause harm to the significance of heritage assets and discuss the weighing up of this harm against the public benefits of the proposals.

3.0 Comments on appellants grounds of appeal

3.1 The appellants' grounds of appeals are summarised as follows:

- a) *Harm to listed building;*
- b) *Effect on significance of listed building;*
- c) *Harm overcome by public benefit.*

- a) King's Cross Station is of national significance. *The appellant argues there is no physical harm to the listed building*, however, whilst the concourse is of fairly recent construction, it is now an integral part of the working station and any works taking place within this area have the potential to impact upon the listed building.

The visual relationship with the highly significant mid C19 Western Range buildings, including the original Booking Hall, which forms a focal point of views looking across the concourse is harmed by the proposed screens. The relationship between the existing screens, the historic station and the concourse structure was carefully considered when the station was recently redeveloped and the current arrangement ensures that the screens are subservient elements in views looking across the concourse, whilst the historic station and the dramatic concourse structure are the main points of interest.

The existing arrangement allows for 4 glazed bays of the concourse structure to be unobstructed, thereby revealing views through to at least two of the Western Range windows behind. As stated in the officer report, it was considered very important that a gap was retained which allowed some visual connection between the new Western Concourse and the Listed Grade I elevation of the Western Range of the station. The consented design of the information screens, including the advertising panels at either end, was considered to be the maximum size appropriate which still allowed views of the historic building behind. The screens would detract from the views and the setting of the listed Western Range building

- b) *The appellant argues there is very limited impact on architectural or historic features as a result of the proposal.* The proposed signs, however, by reason of their location, size and design, are considered to visually compete with the modern and historic architecture of the station building and would serve to visually obscure significant historic fabric. As such, the proposed signs are considered to have a harmful impact upon the significance of the historic station.

- c) It is not considered the harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the building would be outweighed by public benefit as suggested by the appellant. *The appellant argues the public benefit is the revenue generated by Network Rail used for the maintenance of the station and other heritage assets within its ownership and control.* However no evidence has been submitted to confirm that such revenue is essential for the necessary maintenance of the station's heritage assets. Notwithstanding this, the Council argues that the screens do not maintain the heritage asset and therefore do not outweigh the harm to the historic building. It has already been stated above that the existing screens on the concourse were considered to be the maximum permitted. The proposed screens would undermine the efforts to keep the screens as subservient additions and maintain the views across the concourse.

4.0 Conclusion

4.1 Based on the information set out above, and having taken account of all the additional evidence and arguments made the proposal is considered contrary to policies.. Any further encroachment of the signage across the views of the historic building to be unacceptable, harming the significance and the setting of the listed building.

4.2 The information submitted by the appellant in support of the appeal does not overcome or address the Council's concerns. The proposal presents no benefits that would outweigh the harm identified above.

4.3 For these reasons the proposal fails to meet the requirements of policy and therefore the Inspector is respectfully requested to dismiss the appeal.

4.4 If the Inspector is of a mind to accept the appeal, proposed conditions have been included in Appendix A below.

4.5 If any further clarification of the appeal submission is required please do not hesitate to contact Tessa Craig on the above direct dial number or email address.

Yours sincerely

Tessa Craig
Planning Officer
Culture and Environment

Annex A

Condition(s) and Reason(s):

Planning Permission 2015/5393/L

1. The development hereby permitted must be begun not later than the end of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: In order to comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. All new external work shall be carried out in materials that resemble, as closely as possible, in colour and texture those of the existing building, unless otherwise specified in the approved application.

Reason: To safeguard the appearance of the premises and the character of the immediate area in accordance with the requirements of policy CS14 of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Core Strategy and policies DP24 and DP25 of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Development Policies.

3. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interest of proper planning.