

## **PLANNING STATEMENT**

### **APPLICATION FOR ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT AT 187 KENTISH TOWN ROAD, LONDON NW1 8PD**

#### **Introduction**

This is an application for advertisement consent to display one micromesh PVC scaffold screening shroud incorporating one static illuminated advertisement on the chamfered corner façade fronting onto Kentish Town Road for a temporary period until 11/08/17, while the building is under redevelopment. Revenue from the advertisement will ensure that parts of the scaffolding and shroud not covered by the advertisement will incorporate a 1:1 replica of the building facade to mitigate the impact of the scaffolding on the amenity of the area.

Permission was granted (2013/8301/P) in March 2015 for redevelopment of the site (retaining the existing facade) to provide a 5 storey building (2 storey roof addition) with cinema (Class D2) and ancillary cafe and bar use at ground floor, and residential accommodation above. Construction work has already begun at the site, preliminary works have been ongoing since January 2016 and scaffolding was erected in mid September.

The Applicant is working closely with the developer, Uplift Property Ltd, who is in the process of building out the permitted scheme, delivering retail and leisure uses on the ground floor and improved residential accommodation above.

It is proposed to shroud the scaffolding with the 1:1 graphic reproduction of the building facade and display an advertisement for the remaining duration of the redevelopment period. In this way the shroud and advert will shield unattractive scaffolding and building works from public view, and will be removed thereafter.

The dimensions of the proposed advertisement are: 3 meters (height) x 5 meters (width).

The applicant, King Media Limited, is one of the UK's leading exponents of large scale illustrated shrouds and scaffold safety screens. The Company has carried out a number of similar screening projects in London and other cities across the UK and is a pioneer in the innovative use of new display techniques for screening construction sites and buildings.

## Site Location and Description

The existing building was constructed at the turn of the 20th century and comprises a 3-storey building with a large pitched roof. The building is considered a non-designated heritage asset. It is predominantly red brick with double height windows on both Kentish Town Road and Prince of Wales Road elevations. The building originally functioned as an assembly hall for the Polytechnic, the entrance to which was marked by a chamfered corner, with an arched reveal and decorative stonework.

None of the immediately adjoining buildings are listed. The site does not fall within a conservation area. The site falls within a Town Centre. Kentish Town Road is a busy thoroughfare. The general character of the area is commercial with the mix of uses largely consisting of commercial, retail and related uses at ground level and with predominantly offices above.

## Planning Policy Considerations

Within the wider planning framework, there are some controls specific to shroud advertisements. Shroud/banner advertising falls under the definition of an advert requiring express planning consent from the local planning authority. In making their decision, the two issues the local planning authority can consider are:

- The impact on amenity (visual, aural of the immediate neighbourhood);
- Impact on public safety.

NPPF policy aims to achieve the sustainable development and positive improvement to the built environment. Paragraph 67 states *“only advertisements which clearly have an appreciable impact on a building or their surroundings should be subject to local planning authority’s detailed assessment”*.

The NPPF sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development and promotes the positive improvement of the built environment; it encourages local planning authorities to work with applicants to foster a positive approach to planning.

Paragraphs 18-20 clearly define the Government’s key policy objective: to encourage economic growth and build a strong competitive economy in order to create jobs and prosperity *“significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system”*. Advertising plays an important role in stimulating growth by promoting commercial activities, stimulating spending and attracting investment.

Planning Practice Guidance (Paragraph 18b-005) specifically relates to shroud and banner advertisements and states that *“buildings which are being renovated or undergoing major structural work and which have scaffolding or netting around them may be considered suitable as temporary sites for shroud advertisements or large ‘wrap’*

*advertisements covering the face, or part of the face, of the building*". These advertisements will require express consent.

Local planning authorities can formulate their own specific policies indicating what detailed considerations they take account of. These policies and/or guidance statements should not be the only deciding factor and each case should be considered on a site-specific basis. Camden Council's own policies and guidance accepts on a temporary basis shroud/banner advertisements where used to shield unsightly construction works to a building. The temporary nature of the shroud only being required until the works are completed needs to be taken fully into account.

### **Details of the Proposal**

The planned redevelopment of the application requires the erection of scaffolding to facilitate access and ensure safety. The proposal is to screen the scaffolding with the erection of a scaffold shroud employing a 1:1 representation of the building facade covering the full extent of the scaffolded area, and an advertisement inset (3m high x 5m wide) on the chamfered corner (north east elevation). All banner specifications are set out in the schedule of drawings. The developer has supplied a Programme of Works setting out the timeframe for the redevelopment of the site (which is already underway). This document is being submitted with this application.

The scaffold is to be rigged off the building with limited down pipes and fastenings where needed. The scaffold shroud will aesthetically screen the building works from public view and shield workers from the elements helping works to be carried out in adverse weather conditions. The shroud also serves a vital role in preventing dust, debris and falling masonry from potentially causing a danger on the public highway and is essential for reasons of Health & Safety.

The scaffold shroud is a high quality micromesh PVC and would be maintained to a high standard. This mesh material allows for both light and air circulation within the building being shrouded, and is recyclable. The shroud depicts a 1:1 replica of the building facade, and is far superior in quality and design to the typical builder's plastic sheeting that would otherwise be used if advertisement consent was not being sought. Such alternative generic sheeting has the potential to become ragged and unsafe and is not usually as well maintained as those shrouds bearing advertisements. This aspect should be considered to favour a positive impact on visual amenity.

### **Relevant Site Specific Issues and Considerations**

This application needs to be fully considered in the context of its temporary nature where permission is sought only for a limited period until 11/08/17, when the redevelopment should be completed and scaffolding is taken down. The following section deals with the impact of amenity and safety of the proposal along with other relevant considerations.

## **Public Safety**

The general criteria used when assessing any public safety issues where advertisements are concerned is set out in Appendix B to the Annex of Circular 03/2007. The proposal has been assessed against those tests. The type and location of the proposed advertisement display will not create a hazard or danger for the following reasons:

- The type of advertising display proposed does not require a close study nor would it obstruct or confuse any road users in terms of their use of the road, statutory road signs or traffic control.
- The proposed display is not unusual. It is static and will have a good range of visibility, providing appropriate sight lines, thus the display will not appear as a sudden feature or present itself as a road hazard.
- The simple typography and graphic elements normal to this type of advertisement display media are specifically designed to be readily assimilated, understood by road and pedestrian users in the vicinity.
- Implications to road users will be negligible. The site is within an area where traffic access and speeds are controlled.

Having carefully considered the positioning of the shroud banner advertisement, the applicant is satisfied that there is no impact on public safety or highway safety.

## **Impact on Amenity**

The building is currently being redeveloped. The resultant scaffolding and the building works are currently incurring a temporary negative impact on the amenity of the area. However, the site is not as sensitive as other locations in the borough as the site is not a listed building and not located in a conservation area.

The temporary impact of the scaffolding on the host building will be greatly reduced if advertisement consent is granted. The high quality illustrated shroud associated with the display of an advertisement will wrap the scaffolding and building site neatly, presenting a display of an augmented facade that reflects what people are used to seeing at that section of the streetscape. The 1:1 imagery of the building facade and the overall effect of the shroud would be to smarten up the appearance of the scaffolding, minimising its visual obtrusiveness.

The site is in a busy and vibrant commercial location where a variety of different forms of signage are commonplace. The advertisement will add a temporary addition to the landscape of the area and will enliven the vista and provide a point of interest to the frontage whilst works take place to the building. In terms of street scene the positioning and replica façade imaging with advert inset of the size proposed will give those passing through or already familiar with the area the sense of the existing road layout and the building underneath in the street context.

## **Conclusion**

The Council's own policies on scaffold/shroud advertisements are that they are acceptable where associated with works and for a temporary period. In this case, the location of the advertisement on the shroud, the scale and context are appropriate to the building and it is acceptable in highway safety terms.

It is felt that this application proposal meets the criteria of both the local and national policy considerations. In such a busy location, the proposal would provide an aesthetically acceptable, temporary addition to the street scene. The context and appearance of the host building will remain very clear for all to see.

The display for a temporary period of a well maintained shroud advertisement is far superior to the type of netting or plastic that would ordinarily be used by a building contractor. High quality well maintained screening of what would otherwise be a bland and untidy introduction to the street scene of a screen, without replica imaging and advertisement, benefits the visual amenity of the location during the temporary period of the building works.

The Applicant is very happy to discuss the details and/or provide any further information requested by the Council for their consideration of the application. It is hoped that the Council will consider this application favorably and grant consent in due course.