



**TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (as amended)**

**PROOF OF EVIDENCE**

Colette Hatton for Public Inquiry commencing on 19th March 2019

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**APPEAL SITE:**

Delancey Street Car Park, London, NW1

**APPELLANT:**

Ms Moe Wurr of Goldsmith & Howland LTD

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**SUBJECT OF APPEAL**

Appeal against the London Borough of Camden's refusal of advertisement consent for the display of advertisement on boundary wall

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**COUNCIL REFERENCE:** 2017/5628/A

**PLANNING INSPECTORATE REFERENCES:** APP/X5210/Z/3194410



## **INTRODUCTION**

- i. I have been a Conservation Officer working for the London Borough of Camden for over a year. Prior to my current position, I was a Conservation officer at the London Borough of Islington. I have a Bachelor of Arts degree in Cultural History and a Post Graduate Certificate in Historic Building Conservation. Who you are, your qualifications and experience and your familiarity with the area.

## **1.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

- 1.1 The site lies just outside the boundary of the Camden Town Conservation Area and is opposite a number of grade II listed buildings situated on Delancey Street. The area to the east and south of the site are predominantly residential, the area to the north of the site is a mixture of commercial and residential buildings.
- 1.2 Although development began in the Camden Town area in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, the grids of streets and much of the building took place in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the area appraisal notes that there is a '*High proportion of 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings both listed and unlisted, which make a positive contribution to the historic character and appearance of the conservation area*', The conservation area appraisal makes an analysis of the materials types within the area and states that on Delancey Street and the surrounding terraces '*Yellow stock brick is the predominant material, with decoration in the form of rusticated ground floors, stucco mouldings around the openings, and stucco*

*parapet cornices*'. The significance of the listed buildings adjacent to the site is also in part, derived from the uniformity of the terraces and the consistent use of materials.

- 1.3** The use of these historic and natural materials significantly contributes to the character of the conservation area and the significance of the listed building.

**2.0 Impact on the setting of the Conservation Area and Listed Buildings**

- 2.1** As noted in the analysis of the site and the surroundings, the neighbouring conservation area and grade II listed buildings are largely constructed from London stock bricks, stucco and slate. It is also stated that the uniformity of this material palette contributes to the character and architectural qualities of the heritage assets.
- 2.2** Prior to the erection of the current advertisement on the site, the wall, which is constructed from brick, was painted to advertise Oliver's Town. As a consequence of the paint, it is not clear if the bricks are London stock bricks, however the dimensions and texture of the bricks can clearly be seen, reinforcing the character of the adjacent conservation area and providing a sensitive setting to the grade II listed buildings. The hand painted advert also had a faded and patinated quality that reflected the characteristics of the surrounding historic assets.
- 2.3** The current sign, which is constructed from vinyl panels with a garish illustration punctuated by pictures of estate agent boards, has none of the qualities expected in an area of high architectural merit and historic sensitivity.

- 2.4** The vinyl itself as a manmade material, lacks depth and texture and has a reflective and shiny quality suited to an environment with a higher quantum of modern buildings, rather than the historic setting in which it sits.
- 2.5** In addition, the printed nature of the advert (rather than hand painted) gives the advert a computerised modern character, that conflicts with the hand crafted rustic quality of the area.
- 2.6** The picture on the vinyl panels, with its bright colours, contrasts with the subtleties and subdued nature of the historic setting and the proliferation of pictures of estate agent boards emphasises a commercial character that is inappropriate within this largely residential area.
- 2.7** The larger size of the advert also increases the impact it has on its environment.
- 2.8** As a result, the sign detracts from the architectural qualities and established character of the adjacent conservation area, affecting its setting. The sign also provides an unsympathetic setting for the neighbouring listed buildings.
- 2.9** The Council has a number of policies that oppose advertisements that are insensitive to their environment, the local plan states the following in policy D4:
- 'The Council will require advertisements to preserve or enhance the character of their setting and host building. Advertisements must respect the form, fabric, design and scale of their setting and host building and be of the highest standard of design, material and detail'.*

**2.10** The policy also states the following in relation to heritage and conservation areas:

*'Advertisements in conservation areas and on or near listed buildings require particularly detailed consideration given the sensitivity and historic nature of these areas or buildings. Any advertisement must not harm their character and appearance...'*

**2.11** In addition policy D2 of the local plan states the following:

*'The Council will preserve and, where appropriate, enhance Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their setting, including conservation area, listed building, archaeological remains, scheduled monuments and historic parks and gardens and locally listed heritage assets'*

**2.12** The existing advert by virtue of its materiality and graphic does not adhere to these policies and results in harm to the setting of the heritage assets. Historic England identifies harm in *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance 2008* as the following:

*'Change for the worse, here primarily referring to the effect of inappropriate interventions on the heritage value of a place.'*

**2.12** The Council states in its supplementary planning guidance CPG Design in paragraph 3.34 that:

*'The Council will not permit development that results in harm that is less than substantial to the significance of a designated heritage asset unless the public benefits of the proposal convincingly outweigh that harm'*

## **Conclusion**

**2.12** In this instance, the harm to the setting of the heritage asset is less than significant, however, there is no public benefit to outweigh the harm caused.

### **3.0 Grounds of appeal**

**3.1** The appellant argues in paragraph 30 that the content of the advert is not relevant, however the Council maintains that the design of the graphic on the advert is significant when assessing its impact. As noted above, the proliferation of estate agent boards within the image emphasises the commercial character of the advert, a characteristic that could be appropriate in a more commercial setting, but is not suitable within a primarily residential area. The computerised graphic on the advert is also not suited to the organic and hand crafted nature of the conservation area and listed buildings.

**3.2** In paragraphs, 31, 32 and 33 the appellant states that the change in material of the advert does not have a detrimental impact on the neighbouring conservation area and listed buildings. The character of the conservation area and listed buildings is explored in depth in the paragraphs above, and establishes that the materiality of the buildings contributes significantly to the character of the area. The previously painted brick wall on the site, as a result of the dimensions, depth and texture of the bricks contributed to the established character and therefore the setting of the heritage assets. The flat and shiny qualities of the applied vinyl are distinctly different from the qualities of the brick and do not contribute to the exceptional architectural merits of the neighbouring historic environment.

**3.3** In addition, in paragraph 33 the appellant argues that the qualities of the brick could not be seen from a distance, however it is not clear what distance is being referred to in this statement. Viewed from the pavement and from across the street, the qualities of the brick were clearly visible, as are the unsympathetic qualities of the existing vinyl panels.

**Colette Hatton: 19<sup>th</sup> February 2019**