

2022/1678/P

143 Highgate Road, alterations to shopfront

DPCAAC strongly objects to this application. We note that it is virtually the same as the previously withdrawn application 2020/3224/P to which we also objected.

We were delighted to see this corner site back in use, attractively renovated, and making a useful and positive contribution to the community, appearing a great commercial success. Since incorporation with 145 we note various changes later referred to.

Historical setting

The early designation of Wesleyan Place and Highgate Road as part of an extension to the Highgate village CA in 1985, incorporating late 18C / early 19C linear development, is significant (it includes this prominently located small local shopping parade with many original shop details intact). Thus as a CA, it predates DPCA (Feb1992). Many buildings near this site were listed. The site also sits opposite the Grove Terrace (listed) London Squares.

Shopfront design

The entrance into Wesleyan Place has the typical historic dual aspect entrance corner units, no 141 matching no 143; such early shopfront corner design is characteristic of our CA. It is crucially important to retain the visual balance of such corner units and their shop window symmetry. Old photos show that while the stallriser has been lower in the past it has always had dual aspect and never matched that of no 145 but that of no 141. No 145 is of different height and with different shopfront levels and it is vital that these units retain their individual appearance.

'As Proposed' Drawing no 22.0322.03 shows precisely how the alterations would destroy the shops character and corner aspect. Note that this drawing shows the fascias of nos 143/145 aligned - which they are not, nor are the buildings of the same height or upper floor design. **This is truly misleading.**

Since incorporation with no 145, the corner unit has lost its fascia name on the Wesleyan Place side and the shopfront window display has been obscured by permanent internal blinds to allow for high shelving stacked up behind them, this removes light spillage onto the street for natural surveillance, otherwise the street is very dark. The applicant is treating the Wesleyan Place shopfront as a 'solid wall' to facilitate their internal arrangements. Such treatment is in conflict with CLP D1 (7.11) D3 Shopfronts and CPG Design, Shopfronts

Waste and refuse storage

The boxed annotation on the proposed basement floor plan indicates storage for recycling only. This is not enough as it must also include the word **REFUSE** in order to stop waste bins being put on the public highway and **for it to be enforceable in future.**

Applicants Design and Access Statement

Contains multiple errors; we disagree with many statements eg what is claimed in 4.2 to 'create a better appearance with neighbouring shops' and 5.3 'The proposed alterations is minor alterations would have an acceptable appearance' and 6.1 etc. The applicants need in 7.8 for 'more visibility of fresh foods and changing window displays' to attract customers could first be addressed by reactivating the Wesleyan Place shopfront window display as an active display and not as a dead wall. If the applicant's intention in lowering the stallriser is to introduce a pavement display of goods then this is an unsuitable narrower width pavement location. There is much street furniture here and bicycle hoops with heavy pedestrian footfall of schoolchildren, people with buggies, a busy bus stop use etc.

Conclusion

These alterations, by destroying the symmetry of this corner unit, would introduce harm and discord to the shopping parade and would neither enhance or preserve the character and appearance of the DPCA. They conflict with CLP D1, D3 Shopfronts and CPG Design, Shopfronts