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TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (CONTROL OF ADVERTISEMENTS)(ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2007

SITE OF IMPERIAL HOTEL, 61-66 RUSSELL SQUARE, WC1B 5BB

TEMPORARY DECORATIVE SCAFFOLD SHROUD ADVERTISEMENT

Dear Sir/Madam,

Please find enclosed an application for express advert consent made via the planning portal.

The site relates to the principal front elevations to the Imperial Hotel, Russell Square which is shortly to become a live building site where the owner is about to erect scaffolding along the site frontages to facilitate the implementation of a recent planning permission ref: 2019/2985/P for extensions, demolition and reconstructions for hotel purposes. The works and scaffold period is likely to be around 16 months.

The Imperial Hotel extends to 10 storeys high and is located on the east side of Russell Square a short distance to the south of Guildford Street. It has an imposing façade which the proposal seeks to replicate in the proposed shroud. The hotel has 382 bedrooms along with restaurant bars and meeting rooms with various independent commercial businesses at street level, including car hire, shop and bureau de change.

The site falls within the Bloomsbury conservation area. The surrounding area includes a wide range of land uses including commercial, residential and office accommodation

The application relates to temporary consent for a decorative scaffold wrap to add visual interest to the scaffold during building works at the property instead of the normal scaffold appearance.

The predominant element on the shroud will comprise a coloured 1:1 image of the building façade. A small proportion (9%) of the total shroud will be given over to an advertising area inset centrally within the shroud surrounded by the 1:1 image of the building.

This is necessary to fund the building image production, installation and maintenance. The shroud will not be illuminated.

This formula accords with your policy guidance for shroud advertising in conservation area contained within **Camden Planning Guidance: Advertisements (March 2018)** which states as follows,

Shroud advertisements

Shroud advertisement

Large scale advert, covering an entire building elevation, often used to shield construction work.

Shrouds on scaffolding (erected for the purposes of carrying out building works and removed upon completion), will only be permitted where the: • scaffolding covers the entire elevation of the building and the netting on the scaffolding depicts a true 1:1 image of the completed building which is undergoing construction work; • shroud does not exceed the height and length of the completed building (the 1:1 image should also not be extended where scaffolding stretches around a corner); and the • advertisement on the shroud covers no more than 20% of the shroud on each elevation and is not fragmented. The advertisement must also respect the architectural form and scale of the host building. Where shroud and banner advertisements are considered acceptable on listed buildings or in conservation areas, the advertisement on the shroud should not cover more than 10% of the shroud on each elevation and is not fragmented. 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.

The current proposal has an inset advertising area designed into the 1:1 image comprising less than 10%. This meets your advertising policy guidance for the size of advertising area within a shroud located in a conservation area and is proportionate in size.

The inset advertising area fits into the architecture of the 1:1 image.

As a matter of principle, National Planning Practice Guidance (ID; 18b-005-20140306) now gives recognition to such forms of temporary advertising, when it states,

“Buildings which are being renovated or are 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.”

The proposal seeks to retain the appearance of the building façade within the townscape during the period of scaffold screening by creating a comprehensive decorative scaffold shroud screen which would have a 1:1 image of the building façade as its main feature.

During this period the normal amenity level of the site will be reduced by scaffolding and works and the scaffolding itself would then take centre stage in the street scene.

Scaffolding and traditional ad hoc screening usually creates a temporary eyesore as there are no planning or aesthetic controls on this form of temporary development and no real incentive for builders to maintain this.

At the same time the frontage lacks any visual interest for passers-by.

Decorative scaffold shroud screen advertisements are now becoming increasingly common as an alternative to bare scaffold and basic builders screening options and act both as a safety screen to works and add visual interest during the works period.

The decorative shroud would arguably be a more colourful and interesting temporary alternative than scaffolding and the normal screening offering.

It would add visual interest for the temporary period of the works scaffold.

However, the building image could not be provided ordinarily from normal funding and thus a limited amount of commercial advertising has been factored into the scheme to fund (and maintain as a high quality feature) the total wrap to the scaffold.

Yours faithfully,