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# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 January 2013

**by Clive Hughes BA (Hons) MA DMS MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government**

**Decision date: 28 January 2013**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/X5210/H/12/2182331**

**Woburn House, Woburn Place, London W1H 0LU**

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 against a refusal to grant express consent.
  - The appeal is made by Unite Group plc against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Camden.
  - The application Ref 2012/2543/A, dated 15 May 2012, was refused by notice dated 10 July 2012.
  - The advertisement proposed is surface mounted sign at fascia level.
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## Clarification of proposals

1. It is proposed to display a single Perspex sign with white text on a blue background. It would measure 0.575m high by 1.72m wide and be sited above an existing door on the building's Tavistock Place frontage. It would fill the gap between the top of the door and the underside to a cill of the half-landing window above and would be the same width as both the door and the cill. There is currently no signage around this door. The decision notice includes an informative that the Council would welcome an application for a suitably located plaque next to the door. An application for such a sign has since received consent, although this has not been implemented. The proposed sign would be an alternative to that approved sign, not additional to it.
2. The Council has acknowledged that there is a minor error in its Officer Report. I noted at my site visit that there is no recessed section cut into the stone above the door.

## Decision

3. The appeal is dismissed.

## Reasons

4. The site lies within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area. The *National Planning Policy Framework* (the *Framework*) says that advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts. The main issue in this case is the effect of the sign on visual amenity. The Council has referred to Policy CS5 of its *Local Development Framework Core Strategy* and Policies DP24 and DP25 of its *Local Development Framework Development Policies* which, while they cannot be determinative, are material considerations. None of the policies relate specifically to advertisements but they require all development to be of the highest standard of design. Development in Conservation Areas should preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area.

5. The appeal property comprises a very substantial building located at the junction of Woburn Place and Tavistock Place. The main entrance to the building faces Woburn Place and has a sign to the side of its main doors that is in accordance with the type and siting of such signage as advocated by the Council in the informative attached to its decision. The proposed sign would be located above a secondary entrance on the end elevation of the building; there is currently no signage on this elevation. The *Framework* advises that poorly placed advertisements can have a negative impact on the appearance of the built environment.
6. The proposed sign, due to its scale, colour and siting, would appear as a dominating feature on this elevation and would have the type of negative impact that the *Framework* seeks to resist. Due to its prominence, it would harmfully detract from the appearance of the building which is described as a positive building in the Council's adopted *Bloomsbury Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy* (2011). While it is clearly necessary to draw attention to this secondary entrance to the building, this need does not outweigh the harm that such a prominent sign would cause. There are no other fascia signs in this part of Tavistock Place and so the prominence of this sign would appear harmfully out of keeping. It would be detrimental to the character of the wider area. It would therefore fail to either preserve or enhance the character or appearance of this part of the Conservation Area. This would be contrary to the cited development plan policies and advice in the *Framework*. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

*Clive Hughes*

Inspector