

410 High Road Heritage Note – Application Reference HGY/2023/2767 & HGY/2023/3091



Introduction

This Heritage Note aims to provide further background to the design rationale for shopfront and advertisement alterations at 410 High Road, Tottenham N17 9JB. The application site is neither statutory listed nor locally listed, but the building as a whole is considered to be a positive contributor by virtue of its upper floor front elevation. The ground floor shopfront is modern and is not a positive constituent part of the conservation area. The baseline contribution of the existing shopfront to the conservation area and the setting of nearby locally listed buildings is therefore poor and there is great scope to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area in accordance with Section 72 (1) of the 1990 Act.

The proposed shopfront and advertisement scheme has been developed using the Bruce Grove Shopfront Design Guide and in response to application feedback from Haringey's conservation team as the applications have progressed. The application feedback and responses to date are summarised below. The design team's response to the latest comments and overall justification for the final design rationale is provided in the 'response' section.

Conservation Officer Comments

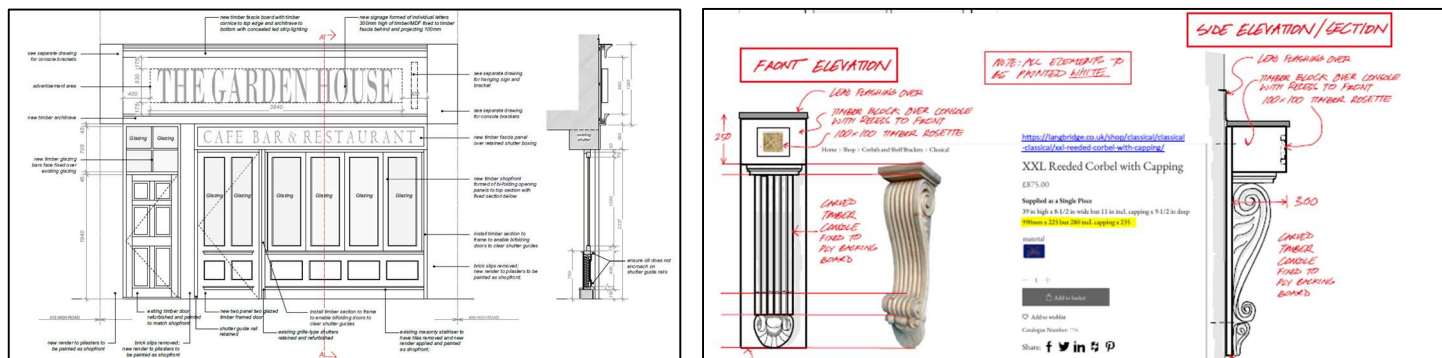
By way of background, the applications for planning permission and advertisement consent (ref: HGY/2023/2767 & HGY/2023/3091) were validated on 13th October 2023. The first set of conservation comments were prepared by Ruth Mitchell and received on 2nd January 2024. The comments were extensive, but the key advice can be summarised as follows:

- *"The proposed shopfront design could be improved by simplifying its design and improving the proportions of the various shopfront elements so that these better relate to each other, and the whole building. The doors should be the same height, and the fascia should be the same depth as the console brackets. The framing around the shopfront windows should be simplified so it is less subdivided, and the framing made less heavy. The console brackets should be changed to a more traditional design (no planting, probably stone/reconstituted stone or similar) particularly in this context. The proposed awning should be incorporated into the fascia as per the acceptable details in the design guide, and the stallriser combined into a single element.*

The design team subsequently met Ruth Mitchell on site to discuss possible design changes in light of these comments. During this meeting it was appreciated that there are certain operational and cost constraints for the café, which must limit the scope of works to a degree. This includes retaining the mesh roller shutter for security purposes and retaining the current residential door as this is not under the owner's control.

Nonetheless, a series of shopfront and advertisement changes were agreed at the meeting to simplify the shopfront design and improve the proportions of the various shopfront elements as far as possible. This included the following changes:

Conservation Comment	Response
Remove the awning, tiling and living console brackets from the proposal; generally, 'simplify' the design.	Awning, tiling and living console brackets have all been removed.
Investigate the possibility of reinstating a traditional console bracket and ensure fascia is the same depth as the console brackets	Traditional reeded console brackets with rosette motif incorporated, terminating level to align with bottom of the fascia
Officers generally happy with the proportions and panelling/glazing pattern as shown in the revised design	Noted and no change
Consider the addition of a hanging sign, or some additional text in the fascia sign/elsewhere to highlight the fact that the property has a garden to the rear	Hanging sign added



Updated Shopfront Elevations, Sections and Console Detail – February 2024 Amended Drawings

The February 2024 arrangement is considered to fully comply with the Bruce Grove Conservation Area Design Guide and Haringey's local policies DM8, DM9, SP11 and SP 12. It would enhance the character of the conservation area. Notwithstanding this view, a further round of conservation comments were prepared by Elisabetta Tonazzi and received on 14th March 2024 in response to the February 2024 arrangement. The latest comments are as follows:

- “Look at Victorian age photos of Tottenham high road and you'll see how characterised by transparent, delicately framed windows (above stall risers of varying height and design) were the shopfronts, and accordingly try and keep it simple and credible, more transparency is needed to that shopfront, any decorative element should be limited to the architectural frame (reinstatement of console brackets is ok), a well-proportioned fascia board with relatively well-proportioned lettering; you already have that secondary fascia that impinges like a droopy eyelid on the expected lightness, elegance and transparency of the shopfront, so keep it simple, only add a small, interesting hanging sign and quality materials”

The comments do not request any specific design changes with regards to the February 2024 arrangement and are more general in nature. They also do not cite the design guide or policy stipulations nor quantify a level of harm to any heritage assets. However, as agreed with the planning officer, the design team have prepared a further series of design amendments in light of these comments. These have been informed by historic precedent where relevant.

Response

From the outset, the shopfront proposals at 410 High Road have been informed by the character of the wider conservation area and archival study of how the area has developed. Indeed, this is detailed at length in the Bruce Grove Design Guide (prepared by the applicant design team). Unfortunately, there are no available records of the original frontage of the building, with the earliest photo dating from the 1950's (see below). The photo indicates that by this time, the shopfront had a reasonably deep stall riser, possibly an infilled transom light and a bulky, angled fascia sign up to the first-floor window cill. The building was also yet to be extended to three storeys.



1950's Shopfront (highlighted in red).

Very little, if anything, remains of the 1950's shopfront, and the current shopfront is a reflection of late 20th century intervention that has been insensitive to the proportions of the frontage and character of the area. Some elements of the 1950's arrangement have been put forward within the current application proposals, including retaining a transom feature (principally to screen the security shutter) and a reasonably deep stall riser to offer some screening to tables and provide consistency with the adjacent unit 'Enjoy Café'.



497 Tottenham High Road



Bruce Grove Shopfront 1893

However, generally the site itself is somewhat of an oddity in the conservation area and specific historic design inspiration, borrowed from other sites, has only been applied where appropriate. For example, the proposed console brackets use a traditional reeded design with a rosette motif on the timber block over the top. We can observe similar motifs on the console brackets at no's 497-507 Tottenham High Road. This terrace is stylistically most similar to the application site and therefore appropriate to reference. Similarly, we know that standardised stall riser design would have been a feature to offer protection and some level of screening. The use of a panelled stall riser and door echoes these historic precedents and are appropriate.

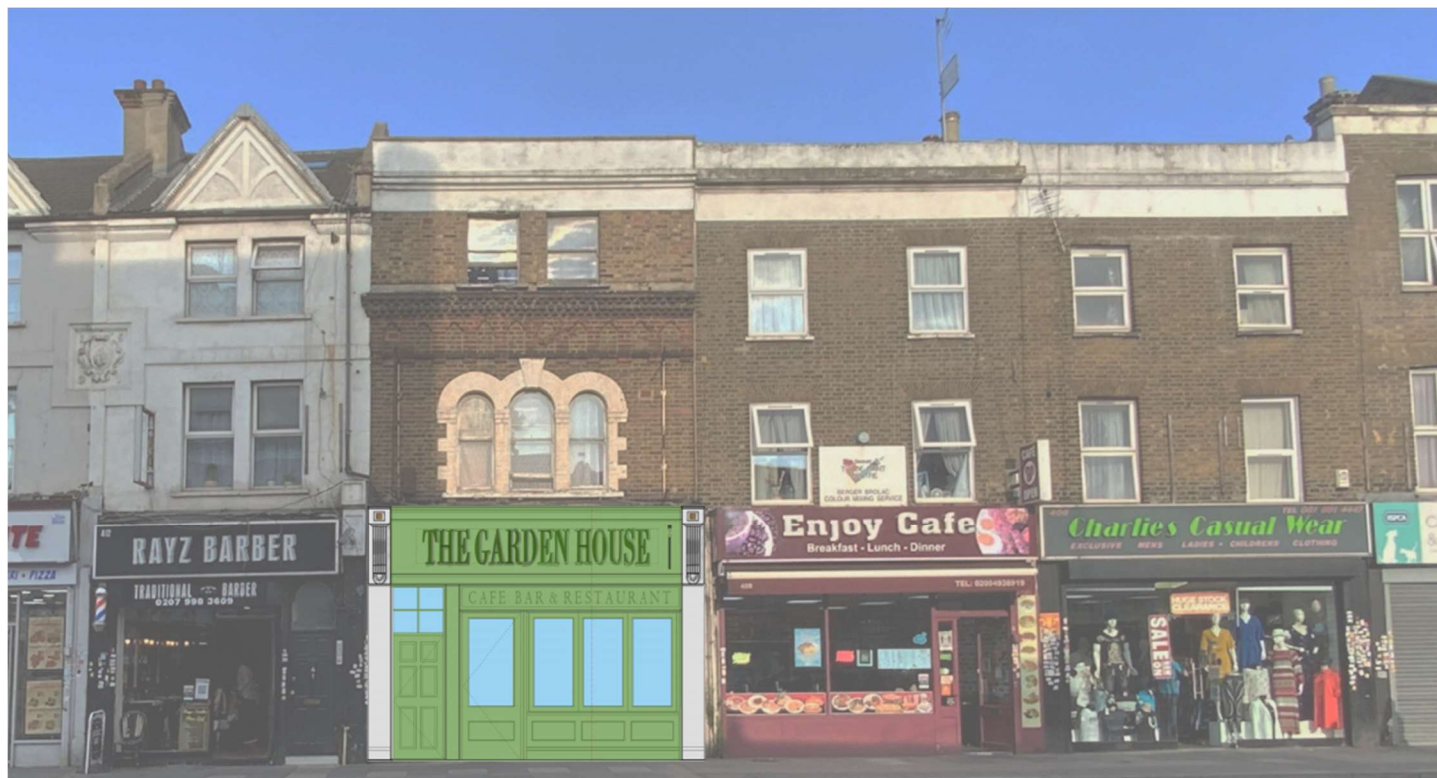
Nonetheless, given the site constraints around residential access, internal operational layout conforming with the shopfront and maintenance of a security shutter, coupled with the fairly unique nature of the building, a reasonably progressive shopfront is proposed to enhance the building and area. As set out above, this approach was largely accepted in previous conservation comments.

In response to the latest set of comments this design has been amended further to include the following:

- Hanging basket has been removed from the hanging sign design
- The concertina windows have been further simplified, reducing from 4 bays to 3 bays, enabling greater transparency and to reference the tripartite window at first floor.
- The shopfront door has been further simplified, reducing to 1 panel of glazing over 1 door panel.
- The stall riser has been lowered to match 'Enjoy Café' and this is now illustrated in street scene drawings
- The update design is presented in colour and with all features on the elevation to give a better understanding of the unity of the design in practice.

The proposals have been developed specifically to ensure the proportions, materials, and details maintain the local character and its variations as appropriate. It is a response to the on-site constraints but also one that adopts appropriate and subtle historic references to the character of the conservation area. It entirely aligns with the principles of the design guide. It is also consistent with Policy DM8 'Shopfronts, Signs and On-Street Dining' and Policy DM9 'Management of the Historic Environment'.

Following an iterative design process and having taken on board feedback from Haringey's conservation team in its entirety, there should be no reason to refuse the applications on conservation grounds, and they offer a considerable heritage benefit in the context of the existing site and the surrounding street scene.



Proposed Shopfront and Advertisement Arrangement March 2024.