

THE GRENFELL PUBLIC INQUIRY

OPENING SUBMISSIONS ON BEHALF OF KEVIN LAMB T/A BESPOKE DESIGN FOR PHASE 2, MODULE 1

Introduction

1. At all material times Kevin Lamb was a self-employed designer who has worked in the glazing and cladding industry since 1988. From 2000 to 2017 he traded, as a sole practitioner, as Bespoke Design. In August 2014 he was subcontracted by Harley Curtain Wall Limited and later Harley Facades Limited (hereinafter “Harley”) for their work on the refurbishment of Grenfell Tower.
2. Like many others, Mr Lamb was both shocked and distraught by the fire at Grenfell Tower. He would like, at this stage, to express his deepest sympathies to all those who have been touched by the consequences of that fire.
3. Mr Lamb is committed to assisting this Inquiry in completing its important work. At the outset of this Inquiry Mr Lamb was assisted, in particular in the preparation of his Rule 9 witness statement, by solicitors representing Harley. However, in July 2019 it became apparent that the terms of Harley’s funding did not extend to representation for Mr Lamb, who was a sub-contractor and not an employee of Harley. As a result, Mr Lamb was required to find alternative representation. An application was made to the Chairman and Mr Lamb was designated as a Core Participant on 26 September 2019. Since 8 October 2019 those acting on behalf of Mr Lamb have been reviewing the material relevant to Phase 2, Module 1. Due to the volume of material disclosed, it has not been possible to review all of the documents to date. Nonetheless, this opening statement is prepared in order to assist the Inquiry and all Core Participants.

Progress prior to Mr Lamb's appointment and the selection of materials

4. The Grenfell Tower refurbishment project had been underway since 2012, with Studio E involved as the architects for the project since at least May 2012. Harley began meeting with representatives of Studio E in September 2013 and were formally appointed in July 2014, at which time they were informed that the cladding would be Reynobond ACM.
5. Given that Mr Lamb was not engaged by Harley to work on the Grenfell Tower refurbishment until August 2014, he had no role in the selection of either the cladding material or the insulation for the project. Thus, the decisions to use Reynobond ACM for the rainscreen cladding material and Celotex for the envelope insulation were made prior to Mr Lamb's involvement and did not fall to be reconsidered throughout his time on the project. He now understands that the suitability of those products had been assessed on behalf of Harley by Daniel Anketell-Jones on receipt of the NBS specification.¹
6. To Mr Lamb's knowledge the materials selected were commonplace within the industry at this time and Mr Lamb had no cause for concern about either their performance or combustibility.
7. It was neither necessary nor expected that Mr Lamb, as a sub-contractor, would question decisions made prior to his involvement on the project. Harley was Mr Lamb's client and had more experience in cladding projects on buildings over 18 metres in height. At the very beginning of his work on the project Mr Lamb was given preliminary drawings produced by Harley which were based upon a similar job that had been successfully completed by Harley and reflected the approach to be taken on this project.²
8. We note that Mr Hyett has made no criticism of Harley for the use of those materials which were selected prior to their involvement. There cannot, therefore, be any higher burden placed upon their sub-contracted designer who was engaged after the products were selected.

¹ HAR00010151_003 at para 9

² HAR00010432

9. All materials selected as part of the rainscreen cladding design were included on the Harley Specification C1059-100.³ The materials chosen for the window infill panels were included in the Harley Specification following internal discussions which included consideration of costing and availability.
10. A Styrofoam core, with aluminium coating, was used for the P1 and Kingspan TP10, which had an aluminium coating, for the P2 panels. The selection for the P1 panels was made by Harley who were able to source it from a regular supplier. Mr Lamb suggested the Kingspan TP10 product for the P2 panels, which were to be custom made. Mr Lamb was aware that such materials had been approved by Building Control on other projects with which he had been involved. As such, Mr Lamb had no cause for concern about either the suitability or compliance of either product used in the P1 and P2 panels.
11. The purpose of submitting the Harley Specification C1059-100⁴ was, as with all drawings, for it to be considered and approved by Studio E. Mr Lamb believed that this would include, where appropriate, consultation with fire specialists or the fire strategy. The Harley Specification, with the materials set out therein, was approved by Studio E.
12. At no stage in the project did Mr Lamb have any involvement in, or knowledge of, the materials used inside Grenfell Tower, including the window reveals. In addition, Mr Lamb was not involved in the installation and did not inspect the works.

Mr Lamb's drawings

13. Mr Lamb was contracted by Harley to provide General Arrangements, Schedules and Fabrication drawings for the refurbishment of the external facade of Grenfell tower⁵. Mr Lamb's involvement commenced on 20 August 2014 and concluded in or around late April 2016.

³ HAR00008991_0001

⁴ HAR00008991_0001

⁵ HAR00010415

14. Mr Lamb was not the Principal Designer on the project. Throughout his involvement Studio E retained the role of Principal Designer. Mr Lamb's role was limited to producing drawings for the construction of the external façade, including the rainscreen cladding and envelope insulation, and fabrication drawings to aid in the manufacture of the components required.
15. Mr Lamb agrees with Daniel Anketell-Jones' observation that, within the construction industry, there is a generally accepted hierarchy where the senior design team, comprising the architects, consultants (fire, acoustic and structural) and Building Control, sit at the top. Below them sit the main contractor (in this case Rydon), and the subcontractors (Harley) sit below that. The opinion of the senior design team is deferred to by everyone sitting below them.⁶
16. The Harley drawings, produced by Mr Lamb, were discussed in detail within Harley before their submission to Studio E. Ray Bailey provided conceptual input from his many years of experience and Daniel Anketell-Jones, with the benefit of an MSc in Façade Engineering, provided technical and structural engineering input.
17. Mr Lamb's drawings were based upon, and were required to reflect, the Studio E drawings. The key aspects of those designs were included in drawing 1279 (06) 110 Revision 00, 'Proposed Typical Bay Plans, Section & Elevation', dated 24th September 2013⁷ and Detail Section Sheet 1 1279 (06) 120 00 dated 26th September 2013⁸.
18. Mr Lamb was aware that architects' drawings are produced and developed through a lengthy process which includes consultation with experts, including structural engineers, acoustic experts and fire experts. Mr Lamb was not privy to, nor provided with the results of, such consultations. In addition, prior to the tendering process, there is often a prolonged dialogue with Building Control. In light of the above, Mr Lamb's drawings did not deviate significantly from the drawings prepared by the architects.

⁶ HAR00010149_006 at para 26

⁷ KL/9- HAR00010447

⁸ KL/10- HAR00010424

19. In his report, Mr Hyett has concluded that the drawings provided by Studio E did not show “*sufficient information to construct the project to completion*”.⁹ The main principles relating to the external façade design should have been developed and resolved by the architects, Studio E, prior to the project being put out to tender and certainly prior to the appointment of sub-contractors. These should have included detailed arrangements and product specification, including insulation, cavity barriers, rainscreen cladding and window infill panels. In Mr Hyett’s view, the designs, as provided to Mr Lamb on his appointment, failed to meet this standard.¹⁰
20. In addition, by the time of Mr Lamb’s appointment, neither the NBS Specification nor the entirety of the Studio E drawings reflected the prevailing intention for the project. For example, the NBS Specification included four different cladding options for the choice of cladding and had not been refined to reflect a complete external façade package following the selection of ACM.¹¹ The NBS Specification still indicated that face fastened solutions were permitted,¹² when there was, by this time, a decision to use a cassette configuration. At least one Studio E drawing still showed a riveted system.¹³

The review process

21. The drawings were submitted, on behalf of Harley, to Studio E for consideration. It was reasonable to expect that the review conducted by Studio E, in accordance with good practice and ISO 9001 Quality Assurance, comprised both design reviews and technical reviews; which focus on compliance and performance objectives, including fire safety.¹⁴
22. Development of the designs was led by the architects. In addition to the initial designs, Studio E provided feedback on the drawings submitted, both in writing and during design meetings. On occasion the written feedback provided was detailed. It was not concerned with aesthetics alone.¹⁵ There could be multiple versions of the same drawings (see

⁹ PHYR000003_0054 at Para 3.7.31

¹⁰ PHYR000003_112 at para 3.10.6

¹¹ ART00001964_063

¹² ART00001964_063

¹³ SEA00002499

¹⁴ PHYR0000006_037

¹⁵ For example SEA00002853_002 and 004, 006

C1059 200 Rev I¹⁶ and C1059 301 Rev F¹⁷). As a result, Mr Lamb reasonably assumed that Studio E were properly reviewing the drawings provided.

Cavity Barriers

23. As an example of the review process relating to cavity barriers, in his report Mr Hyett has confirmed that ensuring that cavity barriers complied with Building Regulations was the responsibility of Studio E.¹⁸
24. In this regard, throughout Mr Lamb's experience in the industry it has not fallen to him to design a cavity barrier system, in the sense of determining the placement of cavity barriers so as to comply with building regulations. Whilst cavity barriers are products to be included within the drawings, it is reasonable to expect that the architect, often in conjunction with a fire consultant, has determined where cavity barriers will be required. Such a decision will involve the consideration of the building as a whole and a building's overall fire strategy.
25. Mr Hyett confirms that it was for Studio E and not for Harley, or indeed Mr Lamb, to fully explore and, in principle, resolve the issue of closing the cavity around the window openings. It is submitted that this would extend to resolving the issue of cavity barriers at the architectural crown. A fully worked out strategy, prepared in conjunction with a fire consultant, should have been prepared and reflected in the tender documentation. As Mr Hyatt opines, "*this is not... a matter that can be left for later resolution by the cladding sub-contractor.*"¹⁹
26. Mr Lamb's drawings, on behalf of Harley, did not include cavity barriers at the window openings. The drawings included vertical cavity barriers along the compartment wall and the columns, and horizontal cavity barriers along the compartment floor. Those drawings were consistent with, and prepared to reflect, the material provided to Mr Lamb. Mr Lamb was not provided with any drawing, document or instruction to indicate that cavity

¹⁶ HAR000008465

¹⁷ HAR00008901

¹⁸ PHYR0000006_062 at para 5.4.25(g)

¹⁹ PHYR000003_067 at para 3.8.13

barriers were to be placed around the windows in this project. In this regard he was provided with, inter alia:

- a. The Studio E drawings²⁰, which shows cavity barriers along compartment walls and floors only;
- b. The NBS Specification for Windows at L10, which makes no mention of cavity barriers around the window²¹;
- c. The Harley quote for works²², which listed only Horizontal Cavity barriers to the concrete floor slab and Vertical cavity barriers to the columns.

27. There was extensive correspondence between Studio E, Building Control, Exova and Rydon in relation to cavity barriers. And yet, the placement of the cavity barriers, or their absence around the window openings, was never queried. It was reasonable for Harley, and Mr. Lamb, to expect that, were they required, this would have been raised. Further, the cavity barriers, as drawn, were approved by Studio E and expressly approved by Building Control on 1 April 2015²³.

28. Mr Lamb was provided with very little assistance, or guidance, for the design of the architectural crown from the Studio E drawings. In particular, those drawings did not clearly indicate the need for a cavity barrier immediately beneath the crown. Mr Hyett concluded that Studio E's drawings, which Mr Lamb was required to translate, were "*inadequate and insufficiently thought through.*"²⁴ As with all drawings, Mr Lamb's drawings for the crown were submitted to Studio E and comments were provided in response. No question was raised as to the absence of additional cavity barriers.²⁵

29. In this regard, Mr Lamb would agree with Ray Bailey's statement that Diagram 33 of Approved Document B is not a useful guide for this particular project which is not a "*common building situation.*"²⁶ Unlike the image in diagram 33, there was no habitable space within the tower's roof.

²⁰ SEA00002499

²¹ ART00001964_141

²² HAR00010155_006- 007

²³ SEA00013076

²⁴ PHYR00000004_90 at para 4.3.81

²⁵ HAR00006711_001-003

²⁶ HAR00010184_021 at para 82

30. It is to be noted that the terms of Approved Document B2 are not prescriptive. They provide one means of satisfying the necessary building regulations “*for some of the more common building situations*” but “*there may well be alternative ways of achieving compliance with the requirements.*”²⁷
31. Whilst preparing his drawings, Mr Lamb was not sufficiently informed about the wider refurbishment, nor, indeed, qualified, to identify whether the proposed works at Grenfell Tower complied with Building Regulations. Ultimately, that decision is taken by Building Control Officers or Approved Inspectors. Neither did Mr Lamb have any role in speaking with Building Control, or submitting material for their consideration; though he would have expected that others, such as Studio E or Artelia, to have been in contact with them.
32. Unlike other parties involved in the design process Mr Lamb did not have access to a fire consultant, although he was aware there was a fire strategy in place. Mr Lamb did not know anything about the broader refurbishment plans, including the finish for the internal window reveals.
33. Studio E was under a duty to check the drawings supplied by Harley for a compliant cavity barrier system²⁸ and, as such, it was reasonable for Mr Lamb to expect that they were doing so.

Conclusion

34. We hope that this Opening Statement will assist the Inquiry in understanding the role that Kevin Lamb and Harley undertook in the refurbishment project at Grenfell Tower and how their involvement fitted in with that of other parties.

David Whittaker QC
Nikita McNeill
2 Hare Court

6 January 2020

²⁷ ADB2 at 12.5-12.9 and see PHYR000003_0007 at para 3.2.6

²⁸ PHYR000003_111 at para 3.10.3