

VIDEO – Petition to support Pomegranate owners reaches over 3,000 signatures



A [petition](#) signed by nearly 3,500 people aims to overturn the enforcement notice served by the council on the owners of Pomegranate Restaurant in Antigua Street which requires them to remove their signage. A [Facebook](#) campaign is also gathering momentum.

The petition by the restaurant owner says:-

*After an 18-month sustained campaign of harassment led by a neighbour, **Pomegranate Restaurant** (located at Antigua Street, Edinburgh) is being forced to remove ALL the lighting and signage from their business. The attached photo shows their “offensive” menu boards and their “eyesore” restaurant frontage.*

Having to comply with this order will have serious negative repercussions for this extremely popular restaurant. It will, in all likelihood, cost the owners and the many staff that they employ, their livelihood.

The previous establishment at the premises, an Italian restaurant, traded for over 20 years without any problems. As a Middle Eastern restaurant, however, they have been plagued by complaints.

If you love Pomegranate and their food, or you simply find this situation completely unfair, please sign this petition and make your feelings known.

The council's planning portal shows that the enforcement

notice deals with lighting, signage and decking outside the property, which it said was an unauthorised change of use. In the enforcement report the council stated that the owners of the restaurant put up unathorised illuminated signage, strip lighting, security cameras, menu boards, wooden decking and a canopy. The property is B listed and lies within the Edinburgh World Heritage Site, so listed building consent would also be required. In 2001 when the owners of the previous occupiers, Ferri's restaurant, made an application, permission appears to have been granted for illuminated signage.

The council claimed that the changes made by the new owners were 'an accumulation of unsympathetic additions...which detract from the simple architecture of the design, to the detriment of the character of the building.'

The council as planning authority have the responsibility of deciding whether an advertisement is appropriate or not. They consider these signs to be 'visually dominating and unsympathetic'. They have demanded removal of the signs.

The Edinburgh Reporter asked the council for comment. A Council spokesperson, said:- "Alterations to the building were made which required listed building and planning consent. We have therefore issued an enforcement notice to ensure work is carried out to reinstate the building as it was."

We asked [RCAHMS](#) for a historic photograph of the building and this is what we found:-



© RCAHMS (Francis M Chrystal Collection) This photograph dates from 1900 but clearly shows the same property all those years ago.

The initial decision was made by the council in November 2012 and was then appealed to the Scottish Ministers who issued their decision in February 2013. This confirmed that the council's enforcement notice should stand, even though the

canopy had by that time been removed. The appeal decision also refused to accept that the bamboo fencing in place was in any way temporary as it had been there for some time. An appeal made at the same time for Listing Building Consent also failed on the same grounds.

Pomegranate owner Jamal Ahmed claimed that the decking had been in place for four years, but the council produced a photo from May 2009 which showed that there was no decking there at that time.

Mr Ahmed clearly believes they are being victimised by the council as you will see in this video report:-