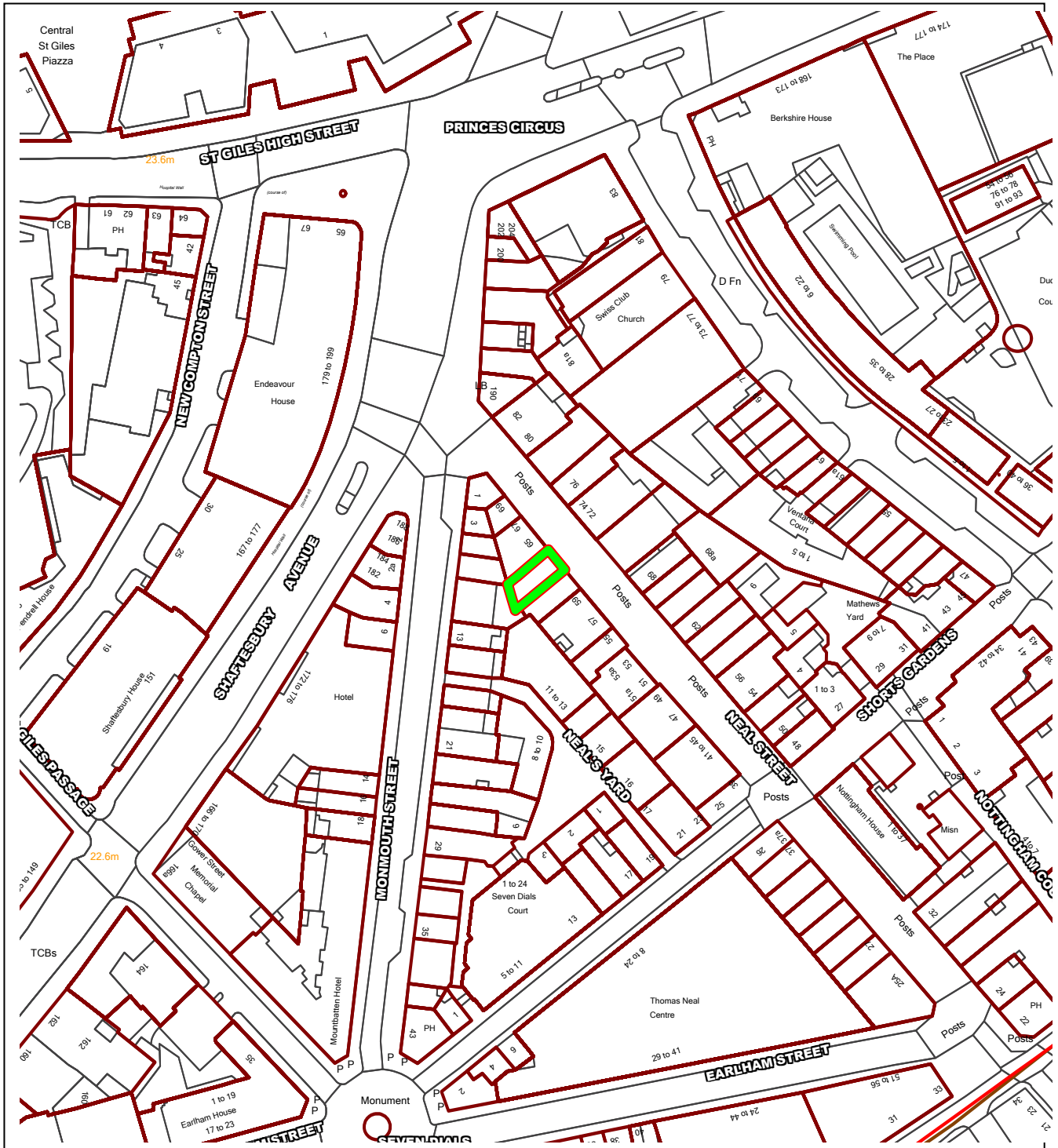


2024/0653/A - 63 Neal Street



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Photo 1 – showing application site (centre) within immediate streetscene



Photo 2 – showing unauthorised signage displayed on shopfront at application site



Delegated Report (Members Briefing)		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date	15/04/2024
		n/a		Consultation Expiry Date	22/03/2024
Case Officer			Application Number		
Tony Young			2024/0653/A		
Application Address:			Drawing Numbers		
63 Neal Street London WC2H 9PJ			See draft decision notice		
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature		
Proposal					
Display of 1 x externally illuminated (spot-lit) fascia lettering sign and 1 x externally illuminated (spot-lit) projecting sign.					
Recommendation	Grant Advertisement Consent with Warning of Enforcement Action to be taken				
Application Type	Advertisement Consent				

Responses

Local occupiers & amenity groups, etc.

Given the type of application (advertisement consent), the Council does not have a statutory duty to engage in a formal consultation process. Notwithstanding this, the details of the application were made available online and the Council allowed a short period of time for our local residents and amenity groups to comment should they choose to do so.

As a result, the following responses were received.

No. of responses

04

No. of objections

04

Summary of responses

Bloomsbury Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC)

responded and objected to the original proposals as follows:

1. *'Internally illuminated signage are detrimental to the character of the Conservation Area.'*

A **local resident** responded and objected to the original proposals as follows:

2. *'I strongly object to this application on the grounds that internally-lit signage is wholly inappropriate in a sensitive Conservation Area. The small premises would be dominated by the signage, obscuring the frontage and would impact negatively on the neighbouring listed property at 61.'*

Seven Dials Trust responded and objected to the original proposals, summarised as follows:

3. *Object to internal illumination of both fascia signs and projecting sign*
4. *Fascia sign should be limited to lettering, centred (rather than offset), without repeated logo on circular fascia sign and omit vertical battens (with suggested flat timber backing instead)*
5. *Commented, recognising that an existing internally illuminated box sign at 1st floor level is a legacy sign that precedes the adoption of the CA Statement.*

Covent Garden Community Association (CGCA) responded and objected to the original proposals, summarised as follows:

6. *Object to the internally illumination of fascia signs and the projecting blade sign on a historic frontage in the conservation area*
7. *Fascia lettering should be painted onto the wooden fascia board in a classic type-face as used on the circular fascia sign*
8. *Projecting sign should be hung from iron brackets*

Case officer responses:

In light of concerns raised by a local resident and amenity groups to original proposals, as well as, Council concerns, the applicant amended the proposals (see 'Revised proposal' section below - paragraphs 1.5 to 1.7).

1. 2, 3 & 6 - the internal method of illumination as originally proposed has now been omitted entirely from the application and replaced by a more appropriate external method of illumination for signage (using spot lights).
4. & 7 - fascia signage has been revised to omit the circular logo sign entirely from the proposals and to centre the fascia lettering. The use of vertical battens are not considered to be harmful given the immediate site context.
5. - noted. The sign is historic and has been displayed since at least 2008.

8. - the revised projecting sign would be fixed to the shopfront in a similar fashion to many existing projecting signs being displayed on other shopfronts located in this part of Neal Street.

Please also see Section 3 (Design and appearance) below for further details and assessment.

Site Description

The application site contains a 4-storey (plus basement) terraced property located along the southern side of Neal Street. The upper floors are occupied as commercial units, and the ground floor is occupied as a restaurant/bar (known as 'Keep Chaating').

The site is located within the Seven Dials (Covent Garden) Conservation Area. The conservation area covers an area that encompasses the streets around Seven Dials and others to the north-east. Its broader significance is derived from the evidence it provides of the seventeenth century urbanisation of the area following the establishment of Covent Garden Market.

The application site is recognised within the Seven Dials (Covent Garden) Conservation Area Statement (adopted in 1998) as a building which makes a positive contribution to the conservation area and is identified as having a shopfront of merit.

Though the site is not listed, it is noted as adjoining no. 61 Neal Street (which is a Grade II building) and that there are several other listed buildings located nearby within Neal Street.

Relevant planning history

2020/0305/P - Alterations to shopfront fenestration. Planning permission refused and appeal dismissed 13/05/2021

2007/5838/P - Use as restaurant at basement and ground floor levels (Class A3). Planning permission granted 11/01/2008

PS9904622 - Installation of a new fully opening shopfront. Planning permission refused 17/08/1999

8703638 - The installation of a new shopfront retention of a retractable canopy and the erection of a single storey rear extension for retail use. Planning permission granted 13/04/1988

CA/901 - Internally-illuminated double-sided box sign with black letters to read LADIES HAIRDRESSERS on a white background. Projection 3'3", depth 2' overall height 11'6". Permission granted 24/11/1967

3962 - Use of the ground floor premises for a Ladies Hairdressing Salon. Planning permission granted 07/09/1967

TP58152 - The use of the basement, first and second floors at 63 Neal Street, Holborn, for the hand finishing of ornaments and mural panelling. Planning permission granted 24/09/1962

Enforcement history

EN24/0115 - Breach illuminated advert. Investigation active pending outcome of current application which is the subject of this report

EN19/0866 - Without planning permission, the replacement of a section of installation of a new shopfront. Breach ceased and signage removed 20/02/2023

EN07/0365 - Unauthorised A3 use - primary cooking taking place. Case closed 14/10/2008 following issue of certificate of lawfulness

EN020640 - Change of use from A1 to A3. No breach found. Case closed 04/09/2002

Other relevant sites

2019/6279/A (no. 51 Neal Street) – Display of non-illuminated fascia lettering on new timber fascia strips. Advertisement consent granted 16/01/2020

Relevant policies

National Planning Policy Framework 2023

The London Plan 2021

Camden Local Plan 2017

- A1 - Managing the impact of development
- D1 - Design

- D2 - Heritage
- D4 - Advertisements
- T1 - Prioritising walking, cycling and public transport

Draft Camden Local Plan

The Council has published a new Draft Camden Local Plan (incorporating Site Allocations) for consultation (DCLP). The DCLP is a material consideration and can be taken into account in the determination of planning applications which has limited weight at this stage. The weight that can be given to it will increase as it progresses towards adoption (anticipated 2026).

Camden Planning Guidance (CPG)

- CPG Design (January 2021) - chapters 1 (Introduction), 2 (Design excellence), 3 (Heritage) and 6 (Shopfronts).
- CPG Amenity (January 2021) - chapters 1 (Introduction) and 4 (Artificial light)
- CPG Advertisements (March 2018) - paragraphs 1.1 to 1.11; and 1.13 to 1.18
- CPG Transport (January 2021) - chapters 7 (Vehicular access and crossovers) and 9 (Pedestrian and cycle movement)

Seven Dials (Covent Garden) Conservation Area Statement (adopted in 1998)

The Institute of Lighting Professional's 'Professional Lighting Guide 05: The Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements Including Digital Displays (published 2023)

Assessment

1. Proposal

1.1 Background

1.2 Following a routine site visit by a Council Planning Site Inspector to Neal Street and the wider area, the Council opened an enforcement case on 12/02/2024 (ref. EN24/0115) in relation to an alleged unauthorised display of signage at the application site in connection with an existing use as a restaurant/bar at ground floor level (known as 'Keep Chaating').

1.3 In response, the owner of the premises submitted an advertisement consent application retrospectively on 19/02/2024 in relation to the alleged unauthorised signage being displayed at the site.

1.4 Original proposal

1.5 The **original** application proposals sought advertisement consent (retrospectively) for x3 signs already being displayed at the application site – namely, *1 x internally illuminated fascia lettering sign, 1 x internally illuminated projecting sign and 1 x internally illuminated circular fascia sign on the front elevation of the building* (see Images 1 and 2 below).

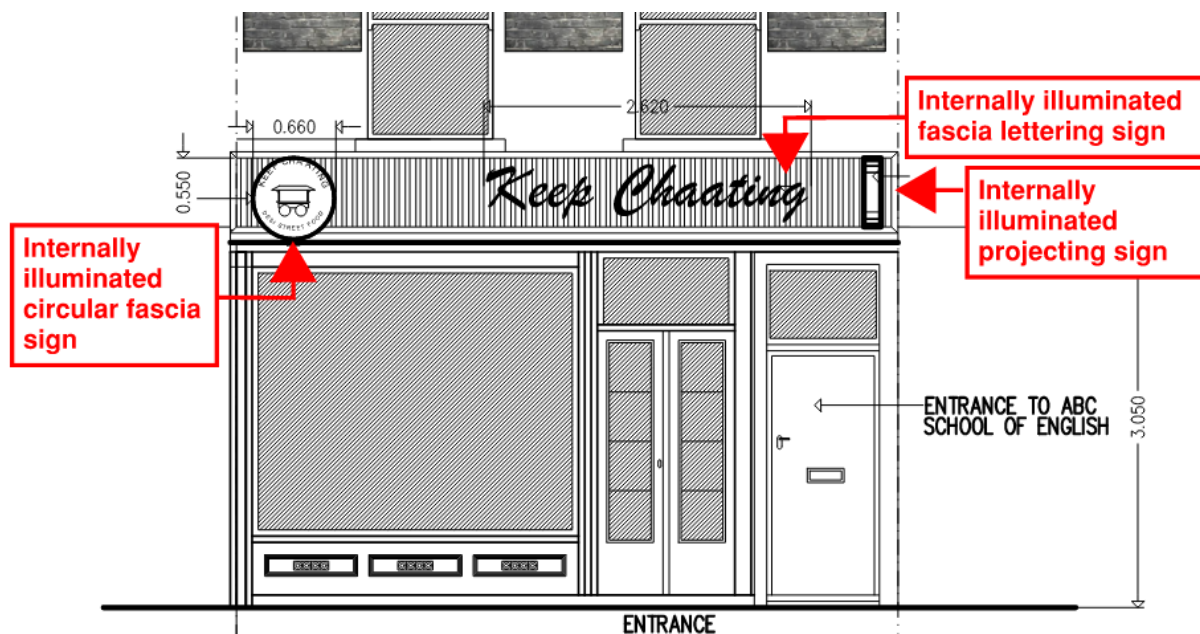


Image 1 – original proposals for front elevation (proposed signs outlined in red)



Image 2 – photograph of original proposals (front elevation of application site viewed at night)

- 1.6 Following concerns received by a local resident and a number of amenity groups (see 'Consultation summary' section above), the Council raised concern in regard to the original proposals for the unauthorised signage already being displayed, given their inappropriate design, number, location and internal methods of illumination, which has resulted in unsightly visual clutter being displayed at the front of the building, particularly when taken together and when viewed at night.
- 1.7 As such, the unauthorised signs as originally proposed are considered to be out of character with and detract from the building and wider streetscape, and are detrimental to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Revised proposal

- 1.8 Following the concerns raised, the applicant amended the proposal and provided a revised drawing (ref. 101-REV D) which showed:
- a reduction in number of signs from three to two (following the removal of the internally illuminated circular fascia sign entirely from the proposals);
 - the use of external illumination only in the form of spotlights (rather than internally illuminating the fascia and projecting signs); and
 - relocation of the fascia lettering more centrally to better respect the symmetry of the frontage.
- 1.9 As a result, the revised application proposal seeks advertisement consent to *display 1 x externally illuminated (spot-lit) fascia lettering sign and 1 x externally illuminated (spot-lit) projecting sign on the front elevation of the building* (see Image 3 below).

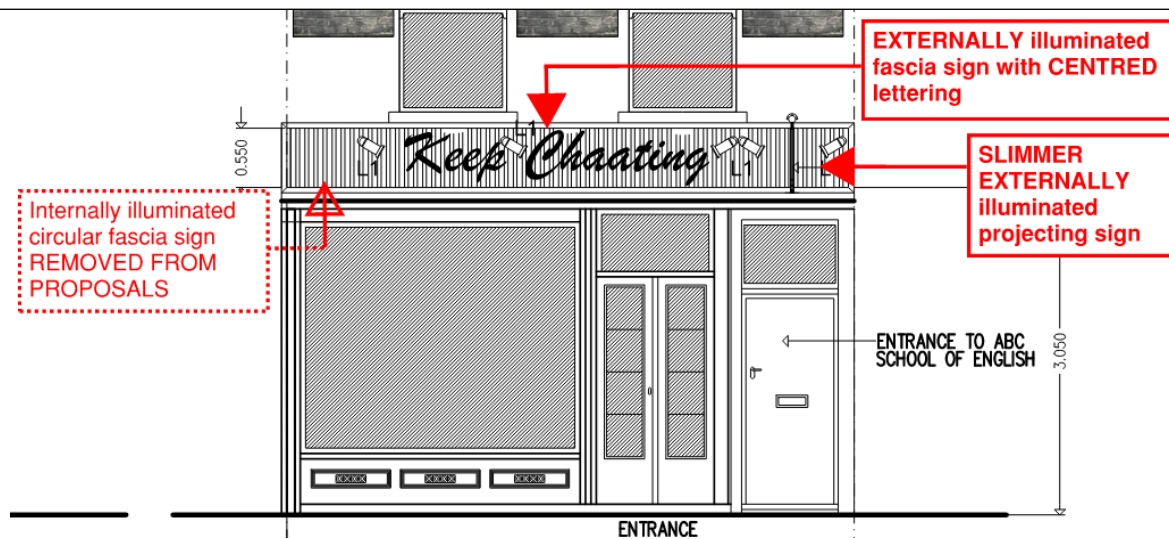


Image 3 – revised proposal for front elevation (proposed signs outlined in red)

1.10 The following assessment has therefore been made based on the proposal as revised (drawing ref. 101-REV D), giving due consideration to its own individual merits, and taking into account the particular site context, including all relevant planning history, policies and guidance, as well as, any responses received from interested parties.

2. Assessment

2.1 The principal considerations material to the determination of the advertisement consent application are:

- amenity – the design and visual impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the host building, immediate streetscene, Seven Dials (Covent Garden) Conservation Area and any settings of nearby listed buildings; and on neighbouring amenity (in so far as the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007 allow consideration in this regard); and
- public safety – the impact of the proposal on highway, pedestrian and cyclist's safety.

3. Design and amenity

3.1 Local Plan Policy D1 (Design) establishes that careful consideration of the characteristics of a site, features of local distinctiveness and the wider context is needed in order to achieve high quality development in Camden which integrates into the surrounding streets and townscape.

3.2 Local Plan Policy D2 (Heritage) states that the Council will only permit works and/or advertisements that would not cause harm to the special architectural and historic interest of a listed building, and will resist development that would cause harm to significance of a listed building through an effect on its setting. Supported by the Seven Dials (Covent Garden) Conservation Area Statement (adopted in 1998), Policy D2 also confirms that the Council will require that all development within conservation areas preserves or, where possible, enhances the character or appearance of the area.

3.3 More specifically in regard to signage, the Statement further states on page 28 ('Shopfronts/ Advertisements') that '*Internally illuminated box signs are unacceptable and generally signage should be non-illuminated or externally illuminated. Signage will usually consist of one fascia sign and one projecting sign. Shop signs should not normally be above ground floor level*'.

3.4 Local Plan Policy D4 (Advertisements) supports the above policies and more specifically in regard to signage, confirms that the Council will resist advertisements that contribute to an unsightly proliferation of signage in the area, contribute to street clutter in the public realm, cause light pollution to nearby residential properties or impact upon public safety.

3.5 Additionally, Camden Planning Guidance (CPG Advertisements) states that any advertisements, of whatever type, on or near a listed building or in a conservation area, must

not harm their character and appearance and must not obscure or damage specific architectural features of buildings.

3.6 Camden Planning Guidance (Design) states in Paragraph 6.13 that 'Any signage or lettering should be uncluttered and respect the character and design of the building'.

3.7 The proposed externally illuminated fascia sign as revised (which would read 'Keep Chaating') would be in the form of green coloured, built-up perspex letters. The letters would be attached to a number of vertical battens and measure 0.6 metres (high) x 2.62 metres (wide). The sign would be externally illuminated by 3 x spotlights with lighting directed generally inwards and downwards, facing towards the lettering (see Image 4 below).

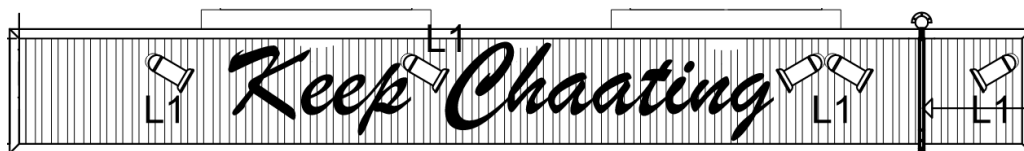
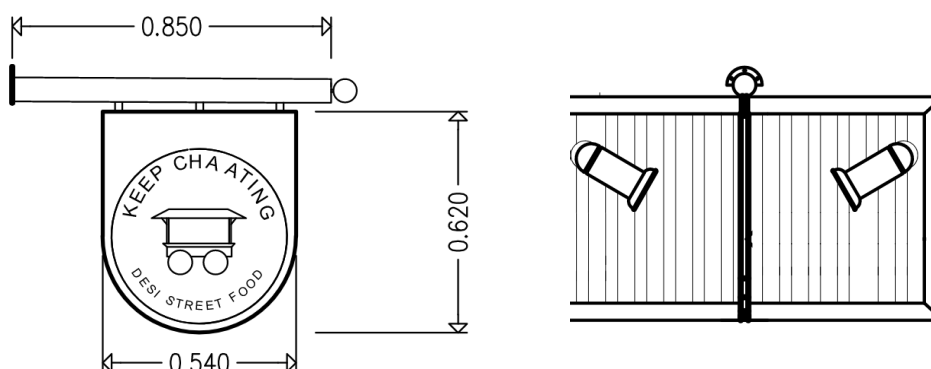


Image 4 – revised proposal for an externally illuminated fascia lettering sign (drawing extract)

3.8 The proposed externally illuminated projecting sign as revised (which would read 'Keep Chaating / Desi Street Food' with logo) would be in the form of black text on a white coloured background. The sign would measure 0.62 metres (high) x 0.54 metres (wide) and would be externally illuminated by 2 x spotlights with lighting directed generally inwards and downwards, facing towards the text and logo (see Images 5 and 6 below).



Images 5 & 6 – revised proposal for an externally illuminated projecting sign (drawing extract)

3.9 The luminance level for both proposed signs would be no higher than 500 cd/m² in accordance with 'The Institute of Lighting Professional's 'Professional Lighting Guide 05: The Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements Including Digital Displays' (published 2023).

3.10 While it is accepted that all advertisements are intended to attract attention, and as such, are commonplace in various forms along the length of Neal Street, it is noted that the proposed signs as revised would be in keeping with existing signage, typical of this part of the street, where part of the character is as a result of a lively mix of traditional and modern shopfronts at street level, and as such, fascia and projecting signs are generally displayed in a fairly similar way to that proposed.

3.11 The use of external illumination for both signs by means of spotlights, centred fascia lettering and with a slimmer fixed projecting sign are considered to be appropriate amendments to the original proposals. While the addition of vertical battens attached to the fascia panel would not be common, they have a relatively restrained appearance given their modest size and would sit well visually with other elements of branding associated with an Indian restaurant/bar such as that which exists at the application site.

3.12 Furthermore, it is also noted that advertisement consent was granted in 2020 (ref. 2019/6279/A) for a similar approach for a site located on the opposite side of Neal Street (no.50), where in that particular case, fascia lettering was approved for display on a vertical wooden lattice which was fixed to a fascia panel

3.13 As such, given the design, size, location, methods of illumination and luminance levels of

the proposed signs as revised, they would not appear out-of-keeping or prominent within the immediate streetscene in this section of Neal Street, and as a result, would preserve the character and appearance of the wider Seven Dials (Covent Garden) Conservation Area within this context.

- 3.14 With regard to a neighbouring Grade II listed building (no.61 Neal Street) located immediately adjacent to the application site, although the proposals would involve the display of signage within the setting of this listed building, it is noted that the advertisement proposals relate solely to the ground floor shopfront of the host building and would not be harmful to or obscure any significant architectural or historic features of either the listed or host buildings.
- 3.15 As such, the impact of the revised proposals would be limited and the signs would not diminish the ability to understand or appreciate the significance of the listed building or its setting, nor would they be detrimental to the settings of any other listed buildings situated nearby.
- 3.16 Overall, therefore, the revised proposals are considered to be acceptable in design and visual amenity terms, in general accordance with all relevant policies and guidance as listed above.

Neighbouring amenity

- 3.17 Policy A1 (Managing the impact of development) seeks to protect the amenity of Camden's residents by ensuring the impact of development is fully considered and by only granting permission or consent for development or alterations that would not harm the amenity of communities, occupiers and neighbouring residents.
- 3.18 The revised proposal would not cause any harm to residential amenities at the host or neighbouring properties, particularly given the modest luminance levels of the proposed signs and minor nature of the revised proposals which are typical of appropriate advertising present in Neal Street and its busy Central London location.

4. Public safety

- 4.1 Policy D4 of the Local Plan states that advertisements will not be considered acceptable where they impact adversely upon public safety, including where they distract road users because of their unusual nature. CPG (Transport) also seeks to ensure that there isn't any adverse impact on the highway network, the public footway and crossover points.
- 4.2 The proposed signs are not considered to be harmful to either pedestrian or vehicular traffic and would not introduce any undue distraction or hazard in public safety terms, particularly given the modest size and luminance levels of the proposed signs. The revised proposals, therefore, raise no public safety concerns.

5. Other matters

- 5.1 Proposals to display advertising by means of a video screen located internally behind the shopfront glazing as originally shown on the submitted drawings are considered to benefit from deemed advertisement consent, as defined by Schedule 3, Part 1, Class 12 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007, and therefore do not require formal determination by the local authority in the form of an advertisement consent application. As a result, the applicant removed the video screen from the revised submission being considered in this report (drawing ref. 101-REV D).

6. Recommendation

- 6.1 It is therefore recommended that advertisement consent be granted with the following warning of enforcement action to be taken in regard to any unauthorised signage already being displayed:

6.2 WARNING OF ENFORCEMENT ACTION TO BE TAKEN

The existing unauthorised internally illuminated fascia lettering, circular fascia and projecting

signs are considered to be harmful to the character and appearance of the host building, streetscene and wider Seven Dials (Covent Garden) Conservation Area, and as such, enforcement action may be taken in relation to this matter should the unauthorised display of signage not be removed within 1 month of the date of this advertisement consent being granted.

The decision to refer an application to Planning Committee lies with the Director of Regeneration and Planning. Following the Members Briefing panel on Monday 16th September 2024, nominated members will advise whether they consider this application should be reported to the Planning Committee. For further information, please go to www.camden.gov.uk and search for 'Members Briefing'.

Application ref: 2024/0653/A
Contact: Fast Track TY
Tel: 020 7974 2687
Email: Tony.Young@camden.gov.uk
Date: 5 September 2024

Development Management
Regeneration and Planning
London Borough of Camden
Town Hall
Judd Street
London
WC1H 9JE

Phone: 020 7974 4444

planning@camden.gov.uk
www.camden.gov.uk

HOME OFFICE ARCHITECTS
39 FORESTDALE
LONDON
N14 7DY

DRAFT

Dear Sir/Madam

DECISION

Town and Country Planning Act 1990

Advertisement Consent Granted

Address:
63 Neal Street
London
WC2H 9PJ

DECISION

Proposal:

Display of 1 x externally illuminated (spot-lit) fascia lettering sign and 1 x externally illuminated (spot-lit) projecting sign.

Drawing Nos: LOC-PLAN; 101 REV D.

The Council has considered your application and decided to grant consent subject to the following condition(s):

Conditions and Reasons:

- 1 No advertisement is to be displayed without the permission of the owner of the site or any other person with an interest in the site entitled to grant permission.

Reason: - As required by regulation 2(1) and Schedule 2 of the Town & Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

- 2 No advertisement shall be sited or displayed so as to
(a) endanger persons using any highway, railway, waterway, dock, harbour or aerodrome (civil or military);

- (b) obscure, or hinder the ready interpretation of any traffic sign, railway signal or aid to navigation by water or air; or
- (c) hinder the operation of any device used for the purpose of security or surveillance or for measuring the speed of any vehicle

Reason: - As required by regulation 2(1) and Schedule 2 of the Town & Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

- 3 Any advertisement displayed and any site used for the display of advertisements, shall be maintained in a condition that does not impair the visual amenity of the site.

Reason: - As required by regulation 2(1) and Schedule 2 of the Town & Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

- 4 Any structure or hoarding erected or used principally for the purpose of displaying advertisements shall be maintained in a safe condition.

Reason: - As required by regulation 2(1) and Schedule 2 of the Town & Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

- 5 Where an advertisement is required under these Regulations to be removed, the site shall be left in a condition that does not endanger the public or impair visual amenity.

Reason: - As required by regulation 2(1) and Schedule 2 of the Town & Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

Informative(s):

1 WARNING OF ENFORCEMENT ACTION TO BE TAKEN

The existing unauthorised internally illuminated fascia lettering, circular fascia and projecting signs are considered to be harmful to the character and appearance of the host building, streetscene and wider Seven Dials (Covent Garden) Conservation Area, and as such, enforcement action may be taken in relation to this matter should the unauthorised display of signage not be removed within 1 month of the date of this advertisement consent being granted.

- 2 Proposals to display advertising by means of a video screen located internally behind the shopfront glazing as originally shown on the submitted drawings are considered to benefit from deemed advertisement consent, as defined by Schedule 3, Part 1, Class 12 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007, and therefore do not require formal determination by the local authority in the form of an advertisement consent application.

In dealing with the application, the Council has sought to work with the applicant in a positive and proactive way in accordance with paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.

You can find advice in regard to your rights of appeal at:

[https://www.gov.uk/appeal-householder-planning-decision.](https://www.gov.uk/appeal-householder-planning-decision)

If you submit an appeal against this decision you are now eligible to use the new *submission form* (Before you start - Appeal a planning decision - GOV.UK).

Yours faithfully

Chief Planning Officer

DRAFT

DECISION