

DISCLAIMER

Decision route to be decided by nominated members on Monday 22nd March 2010. For further information see

<http://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/environment/planning-and-built-environment/planning-applications/development-control-members-briefing/>

Delegated Report (Members Briefing)		Analysis sheet	Expiry Date:	24/03/2010
		N/A / attached	Consultation Expiry Date:	3.3.10
Officer			Application Number(s)	
Charles Thuaire			2009/4385/A 2009/5662/L	
Application Address			Drawing Numbers	
Heath House, North End Way, London, NW3 7ET			See decision notice	
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature	
Proposal(s)				
Listed building consent and advertisement consent for the display of externally illuminated sign above main entrance gate facing Whitestone Pond and display of two non-illuminated signs affixed to side boundary walls on Spaniards Road and North End Way.				
Recommendation(s):		Part grant/part refuse advert consent and listed building consent		
Application Type:		Listed Building Consent Advertisement Consent		
Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:		Refer to Draft Decision Notice		
Informatives:				

Consultations

Adjoining Occupiers:	No. notified	01	No. of responses No. Electronic	03 03	No. of objections	03
Summary of consultation responses:	<p>Plus Site notice expiring 3/3. Residents from Belsize and NW6- object- disfigures war memorial and Whitestone Pond and listed house; no need for this exaggerated display of boards; sets awful precedent and intrudes on visual amenity; inappropriate for sign of this size and illumination in area of such beauty; unnecessary, oversized, illuminated and intrusive.</p> <p>Neighbour in Jack Straws Castle comments- no objection to 2 smaller signs on side walls which are relatively unobtrusive; objects to larger one above front garden with illumination- overly intrusive and disrespectful to war memorial; no commercial signage should be permitted on front boundary and if any signage is allowed, it should be same size as other 2 and no higher than walls and well to side of memorial; should be only allowed on strict time-limited basis.</p> <p>(Original complainant has not responded)</p>					
CAAC/Local groups* comments: <small>*Please Specify</small>	<p><u>Heath and Hampstead Society</u> object- they already requested enforcement action to remove them in October 2009 and thus application is a delaying tactic.</p> <p><u>Councillor Chung</u>- hoardings are like estate agent boards which are forbidden in Hampstead conservation area. Ugly and incongruous on such a site; estate agents can market properties without need for such signs; advertises vacant building for squatters etc.</p> <p><u>Councillors Roberts and Knight</u>- have sought to remove these by requests to enforcement team since October; delay in submitting correct applications since then by 3 months is simply a delaying tactic to maximise exposure; boards should be removed immediately and fines issued.</p> <p><u>Vale of Health Society</u>- estate agent boards on this highly visible site are unsightly and commercially unnecessary; ancillary advertising of estate agents also sets unfortunate precedent.</p>					

Site Description					

Large triangular site with its southern apex facing the roundabout junction between North End Way and Spaniards Road; it contains a substantial vacant detached house listed Grade 2* facing the roundabout and Whitestone Pond. The house has a curved driveway on this frontage accessed by 2 entrances on either side of the (unlisted) war memorial facing the roundabout. The boundary wall around the whole site and associated metal gates are listed Grade 2. Site lies within a conservation area and Metropolitan Open Land, and adjoins the heath as well as several other listed buildings in residential use eg. Jack Straws Castle and Old Court House.

Site is subject to a relatively recent planning permission and LB consent for restoration and extension

of the listed house and erection of a new house at rear, plus a S106 requiring financial contributions for highway improvements.

Site is still vacant and for sale, and new estate agent boards have been erected on the entrance, hence these applications to regularise the signs.

Relevant History

19.1.09- pp/lbc granted for demolition of garage block and erection of new west side wing comprising basement, lower ground, ground and 1st floors including double garage; erection of rear ground floor conservatory extension; remodelling of roofs of main house and east side wing; various external alterations; and associated landscaping including new walled courtyard to rear of garage wing.

Relevant policies

B1,3,4,6,7

CPG

Hampstead CAS

Assessment

3 signs have been installed as follows-

1. 2.4m high 3m wide 50mm thick sign sited above the left hand entrance gate and fixed to the gate piers by timber struts so that it spans the gate at 2.64m above ground; the top has an external trough-light to illuminate the sign.
2. 1.5m high 1.8m wide 3mm thick sign on boundary wall fixed to brickwork by screws on left side on North End Way and next to this street sign; it is not illuminated.
3. 1.5m high 1.8m wide 3mm thick sign fixed on wall of Spaniards Rd side and next to street sign.

The period of display requested is for one year, ie. from 20.11.09 to 19.11.10.

The advertisements were displayed without consent in September 2009 and are designed to facilitate the sale of the house in the current recession. Due to delays in validation arising from incomplete applications, the listed and advert applications were only registered in late January 2010.

Large sign at entrance

The first sign is extremely large and prominently sited, due to not only its location facing the roundabout in an open landscape but also its height and position raised above the entrance gates. It is considered excessive in its size and prominence in this location. It towers above the entrance gates and surrounding wall and appears as an obtrusive and incongruous feature. Its size also dominates the site and almost overpowers the listed house behind. It is thus considered to be extremely damaging to the setting of the host building which is listed Grade 2* and that of adjoining Grade 2 listed buildings on the west side of North End Way. Furthermore it harms the setting of the war memorial which acts as a focal point in front of this house. Due to the location of the roundabout at the brow of the hill, long views are possible from Heath Street past Whitestone Pond and towards the war memorial and furthermore the whole of this junction is visible from the heath on all sides. Thus the site and entrance is in a very prominent location. No other advertising exists in the area due to the lack of commercial premises. The sign thus dominates the setting of this landscape and it is considered that it harms the rural and open character and appearance of this part of the conservation area and adjoining heath. Its illumination further increases this dominance and intrusion in these surroundings.

In this regard, the display contradicts policy B4 which states in its justification that, "if poorly designed or sited or out of scale, [signs] can detract from the appearance of individual buildings" and "conservation areas and listed buildings are particularly sensitive to both poorly designed and too many advertisements." The advertisement would harm the character and appearance of the site and surroundings and is contrary to policies B4b, B6 and B7.

Two signs affixed to boundary walls

The other 2 non-illuminated signs are much smaller and more discrete in their location and size. The displays show a picture of the approved scheme, aerial photo of the whole site and smaller script explaining what is proposed. These 2 signs are tucked to the side of the site behind the main entrance wall and fixed neatly against the high brick boundary wall next to the existing street name plates and

near Belisha beacons for the pedestrian crossings. They are considered appropriate in size and style to the context of both the listed house and the overall site. They do not dominate the streetscape and appear as relatively low-key features which cannot be read visually together in one view; it is considered that they do not detract from the character of the CA or heath.

It is acknowledged that Hampstead conservation area is subject to a Regulation 7 restriction preventing display of any estate agent boards in order to prevent a proliferation of visual clutter. The proposed signs are akin to estate agent boards.

However it is considered that an exception should be made in this instance. The signs are unique to the site and carefully placed, and appear as relatively small in the context of the boundary wall and whole triangular site; no other such signs are likely to be placed in the vicinity as the site is so extensive and as the buildings opposite are already converted and sold off, thus the signs would not set a precedent for any further visual clutter here. Furthermore it is considered that signage on this site is important as it has been vacant for decades and the listed house is a Building at Risk. The permission was granted on the basis that not only the house would be restored and enhanced but also S106 financial contributions would be made to improve the highways around the Pond in time for the Olympics (the site is on the route of the cycle road race), which would be augmented by finances from TfL and City Corporation. The publicity of this site to potential purchasers is thus seen as important to facilitate and speed up the implementation of this permission (which expires in January 2012) and associated community benefits; officers are concerned that a blanket ban on all sale boards on this site, given this unique context, may result in unfortunate delays and jeopardise the whole scheme and associated works.

Accordingly it is recommended that the 2 smaller signs be granted consent for 8 months (ie. until mid November 2010 as requested) but the larger illuminated one be refused consent with warning of enforcement action.