

Delegated Report		Analysis sheet		Expiry Date:		27/09/2007	
		N/A / attached		Consultation Expiry Date:		N/A	
Officer				Application Number(s)			
Miss Kiran Chauhan				2007/3895/A			
Application Address				Drawing Numbers			
9-10 Southampton Place, 121-125 High Holborn, 3-9 & 11-13 Southampton Row London WC1V 6QA				See decision.			
PO 3/4	Area Team Signature	C&UD	Authorised Officer Signature				
Proposal(s)							
Display of externally illuminated uplight shroud advertisements on scaffolding in front of High Holborn and Southampton Row elevations.							
Recommendation(s):		Refuse					
Application Type:		Advertisement Consent					
Conditions or Reasons for Refusal:		Refer to Draft Decision Notice					
Informatives:							
Consultations							
Adjoining Occupiers:	No. notified	00	No. of responses	00	No. of objections	00	
			No. electronic	00			
Summary of consultation responses:	N/A						
CAAC/Local groups* comments: *Please Specify	N/A						

Site Description

The site comprises four main buildings which were occupied by offices with retail units at street level. As construction work has started on site in connection with recent planning consents (see planning history for details) the buildings are now vacant. The proposal relates to the buildings at nos. 121 to 125 High Holborn and no. 1 Southampton Row that are part of numerous high level dormer windows, and tri-partite windows with heavy mullion details. The surrounding buildings include a mix of units that include offices, language schools and some residential uses, the nearest of which is at 8 Southampton Place.

The site is contained by High Holborn to the south, Southampton Row to the east and Southampton Place to the west. None of the buildings are listed, however the site is adjacent to grade II* listed buildings on Southampton Place (nos. 1-8), and grade II buildings on Southampton Row (nos. 17-23). It is also within close proximity to the listed properties along Sicilian Avenue. There are also listed buildings on the opposite side of Southampton Place and Southampton Row. The site lies within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, Central London frontage, a designated Crossrail Route and an Archaeological Priority Area.

The site is located on the corner of a very busy highway junction that carries vehicular traffic from the Strand towards Euston and from Gray's Inn Road towards Oxford Street. It is also within close proximity to Holborn Underground Station and appears to service a high volume of pedestrian movements.

The proposal relates to the two shroud advertisements that would be attached to scaffolding that would be erected to the High Holborn and Southampton Row facades. Scaffolding is required in association with the implementation of planning permissions that are referred to below.

Relevant History

2005/1082/P

Planning permission was granted on 05/08/2005 for the demolition and redevelopment of 9-10 Southampton Place and 3-9 Southampton Row, and demolition and redevelopment behind the retained facade at 121-126 High Holborn, 1 and 11-13 Southampton Row to provide new office and retail accommodation together with associated plant, servicing and parking.

2006/4167/P

Planning permission was granted on 28/11/2006 for amendments to retail (Class A1) and office (Class B1) floorspace creating a gross increase in floorspace including alterations as a variation to planning permission granted subject to a section 106 legal agreement dated 5th August 2005 (ref. 2005/1082/P) (for the demolition and redevelopment of the site to provide new office and retail accommodation together with associated plant, servicing and parking). The permission is subject to a deed of variation to the S106 agreement. The permitted extension to the floorplate on the northern side elevation of the building at first to fifth floors included a proportion of glazing that measured 17m in length.

2006/4252/P

Planning permission was granted on 28/11/2006 for the external alterations to the roof of the building to include lift overruns, additional plant equipment that would be enclosed by acoustic screen at roof level and facade cleaning track and cradle to the northern elevation as a variation to planning permission 2005/1082/P granted 05 August 2005 for the demolition and redevelopment to provide new office and retail accommodation together with associated plant, servicing and parking. The permission is subject to a deed of variation to the S106 agreement.

2007/0145/P

Planning permission was granted on 27/02/2007 for the partial dismantling and reconstruction of top floor and roof as an amendment to the planning permission granted 5th August 2005 (ref. 2005/1082/P) (for the partial demolition and redevelopment of the site to provide new office and retail accommodation together with associated plant, servicing and parking). The permission is subject to a deed of variation to the S106 agreement.

2007/1572/A

Planning permission was **refused** on 21/05/2007 for the display of externally illuminated uplight shroud advertisements on scaffolding in front of High Holborn and Southampton Row elevations. Refused on the following grounds:

The proposed advertisement by reason of its size, scale and method of illumination, would be unduly obtrusive in this prominent location, detrimental to the appearance of the building and the character and appearance of the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, contrary to policies B1 'General design principles', B4b 'Advertisements and signs' and B7 'Conservation areas' of the London Borough of Camden Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006, having regard to paragraphs 9 to 12 'Shroud/Banner Advertisements' of the Camden Planning Guidance 2006.

Relevant policies

Adopted Unitary Development Plan 2006

SD6 'Amenity for occupiers and neighbours', B1 'General design principles', B4 'Shopfronts, advertisements and signs', B7 'Conservation area', T12 'Works affecting highways'.

Camden Planning Guidance 2006

'Advertisements and signs', 'Conservation areas', 'Hoardings and banner advertisements'

Assessment

Advertisement consent is sought for the display of two advertisements on illustrated micromesh PVC scaffold safety screen of an illuminated scaffold shroud banner for a temporary period. The banners would be located on the southern elevation of the building fronting High Holborn and the eastern elevation fronting Southampton Row. The banner advertisements would measure 20m (width) by 10m (height) on the High Holborn elevation and 12m (width) by 10m (height) on the Southampton Row elevation. A lighting unit containing seven uplights on High Holborn elevation and five uplights on the Southampton Row elevation would be attached to part of the scaffolding that would project out providing uplighting illumination to the temporary advertising banners. The banners would be displayed for the length of the construction works that are scheduled to take approximately 18 months.

[The application is identical to the previously refused application under reference 2007/1572/A. The report and the reason for refusal is therefore also identical to the previous].

The main issues to consider are:

- The impact of the proposal on the character and appearance of the conservation area
- Amenity to adjoining occupiers and neighbours
- Highway safety

Character and appearance of the conservation area

The site is within the Bloomsbury Conservation Area, where it is necessary to pay special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing its character and appearance. The designation does not necessarily preclude the display of well sited advertisements of suitable size and design on commercial premises in areas reflecting a degree of commercial activity. However the advertisement should not detract from the appearance of the area.

It is considered that the full size image of the façade of the building that would be located on the buildings on the Southampton Place elevation of the development would be an improvement over the present scaffolding and safety mesh and would be acceptable.

Camden Planning Guidance states that shroud/banner advertisements on scaffolding on listed buildings or in conservation areas would only be permitted where they cover no more than 10% of each elevation and should not be fragmented. The agent has confirmed in the supporting information that both banners would cover a total of 16% of the scaffolding area. It would appear that the shroud advert would cover approximately 44% of the Southampton Row elevation and 17% of the High Holborn elevation. The adverts, especially on the Southampton Row elevation, would appear excessive in terms of their proportion and size and would be considered damaging to the setting, character and appearance of these elevations of the building.

This attractive building is bounded by High Holborn to the south, Southampton Row to the east and Southampton Place to the west. Due to the width of the road network and its lack of curvature, longer uninterrupted views are afforded of the elevations fronting High Holborn and Southampton Row. The banner advertisements would be visually prominent within the surrounding streetscene. Although the banners would be erected for a temporary period it is considered that its size, proportions and method of illumination would cause harm to the appearance of the conservation area.

Amenity

It is proposed to illuminate the banner advertisements with 7 no. uplighters on High Holborn elevation and 5 no. uplighters that would direct light upwards over the advert. The east elevation of the building would be visible from the residential flats at 2-6 Southampton Row that lies approximately 20m to the north east of the site. The closest residential occupiers that would have views of the south elevation of the building would be at No. 208 High Holborn that lies approximately 50m to the southwest. These would be at an oblique angle and would be relatively restricted. Given the close proximity of the residential flats to the north east of the application site, it would be considered necessary to restrict the hours of illumination in order to ensure that the amenity of the flats would not be adversely affected by the proposal.

Highways

Given the size of the advertisement banner and the method of illumination the proposal may present a potential distraction to motorists travelling along High Holborn and Southampton Row/Kingsway.

Other considerations

The agent has referred to other sites where advertisements of this type where granted consent. One of the examples is in Camden at 15-23 Parkway that was allowed at appeal on 06 October 2005 (LBC ref no. 2005/0941/A). It must be noted that although the site is also within a conservation area, the Inspector did advise, "...this (decision) does not mean that a similar advertisement in another location would be acceptable. Each case is decided on its own merits."

Conclusion

The proposal would be considered unacceptable in terms of its impact on the character and appearance of the building, the conservation area and highway safety and would be recommended for refusal.