

Delegated Report			Expiry Date:	19/05/2010
Officer			Application Number(s)	
Matthias Gentet			2014/7013/A	
Application Address			Application Type:	
13 Shorts Gardens London WC2H 9AT			Advertisement Consent	
1st Signature	2nd Signature (If refusal)	Conservation	Recommendation(s):	
			Refuse Advertisement Consent	
Proposal(s)				
Display of internally illuminated fascia and projecting signs.				
Consultations				
Summary of consultation responses:				
Site Description				
<p>The site is a 5-storey brick building located on the north-west side of Shorts Gardens which is a narrow cobble thoroughfare within the Seven Dials Conservation Area. Seven Dials, sited at the south-west tip of the conservation area, has a unique street plan with a layout consisting of 7 narrow streets stemming from a Doric column (replica), called The Monument, at its centre. The area has a very strong traditional identity and architectural history, comprising distinctive and distinguished Grade II listed buildings such as the Cambridge Theatre overlooking on to the Monument, the Thomas Neal Centre (forming part of a cluster of listed buildings) - opposite the site address which is a remnant of the brick warehouse buildings linked to the brewery industry of the area of Shorts Gardens and Long Acre - and many more, mainly concentrated on the south/south-east part of Seven Dials.</p> <p>The area is a mixture of business at ground floor level – mainly retail – and residential and sometimes offices at upper levels. Seven Dials is in close proximity of the West End theatres on St Martin’s Lane, Drury Lane, Cambridge Circus and West Street. The Thomas Neat Centre and Matthew Yard on Shorts Gardens provides an array of shops and cafes with offices and residential at upper levels and workshops.</p>				
Relevant History				
Host:				
<p>2008/4484/A – (refused with warning of enforcement action to be taken on 08/12/2008) - Retention of an internally illuminated fascia sign and an internally illuminated projecting sign to the retail shop - 13 Shorts Gardens. [<u>Reasons for refusal</u>: The fascia sign and projecting sign are considered unsuitable in this location by virtue of their method of illumination.] <u>Please note that no action was taken to have the sign removed.</u></p> <p>2007/0139/A – (refused on 09/03/2007) - Display of internally illuminated projecting sign - 13 Shorts Gardens. [<u>Reasons for refusal</u>: the use of internal illumination is considered unacceptable given the sites location in a Conservation Area. The internal illumination is considered to cause a negative effect upon the character of the Conservation Area as all other box signs in the area are either non-illuminated or externally illuminated.]</p>				

2004/0555/A – (granted on 17/02/2004) - Display of externally illuminated fascia and internally illuminated halo-lit projecting sign - 13 Shorts Gardens.

Adjacent sites:

2013/2875/A – (granted on 26/06/2013) - Display of 1x non illuminated fascia and 1x non illuminated projecting sign - 19 Shorts Gardens.

2012/3753/A – (granted on 07/09/2012) - Display of non-illuminated 1 x hanging sign - 15 Shorts Gardens.

2010/5731/A – (granted on 20/12/2010) - Display of two no. externally illuminated fascia - 34 Shorts Gardens.

2010/3091/A – (granted on 03/08/2010) - Details of two non-illuminated projecting signs to side and front elevations at first floor level to replace existing projecting sign on front elevation - 21-23 Shorts Garden.

2010/2943/A – (granted on 03/08/2010) - Advertisement consent to display an internally illuminated fascia sign and a non- illuminated projecting box sign - 41-45 Shorts Gardens.

2007/4374/A – (granted on 15/11/2007) - Display of two externally illuminated projecting signs to existing brackets - 2 & 8 Shorts Gardens.

2007/1947/A – (granted on 06/06/2007) - Display of non-illuminated framed print and gallery style plaque in association with the National Gallery's collection for a temporary period until 31 August 2007 (on Neal's Yard frontage) - 21-23 Shorts Gardens.

2007/1942/A – (granted on 04/06/2007) - Display of non-illuminated framed print and gallery style plaque in association with the National Gallery's collection for a temporary period until 31 August 2007 - 9-10 Shorts Gardens.

2006/2832/A – (granted on 02/08/2006) - Display of 1x halo-lit fascia sign and 1x internally illuminated projecting sign - 5-11 Shorts Gardens.

2006/2516/A – (refused on 14/08/2006) - Display of 2no. internally illuminated projecting signs - 37A Neal Street & 22 Shorts Gardens.

2006/1206/A – (granted on 26/04/2006) - Display of non-illuminated projecting/hanging sign - 27 Shorts Gardens.

2006/0664/A – (granted on 31/03/2006) - Display of 2 illuminated neon fascia signs and a coffee cup profile hanging sign above fascia level - 19 Shorts Gardens.

2004/5291/A – (granted on 21/01/2005) - Display of internally illuminated tenant directory sign at ground floor level - 22 Shorts Gardens.

2004/0977/A – (granted on 21/05/2004) - Display of externally illuminated projecting sign - 2 Shorts Gardens.

2003/3265/A – (granted on 09/01/2004) - Display of non-illuminated projecting sign to front elevation at first floor level - 21-23 Shorts Gardens.

2003/1879/A – (refused on 02/10/2003) - Display of 6 internally illuminated projecting signs at fascia level - 41-45 Shorts Gardens.

Relevant policies

LDF Core Strategy and Development Policies

Core Strategy Policies

CS5 – Managing the impact of growth

CS14 – Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage

Development Policies

DP24 – Securing high quality design

DP25 – Conserving Camden's Heritage

DP26 – Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours

Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007

Camden Planning Guidance 2011 (as amended)

CPG1-Design Chap 8

Seven Dials Conservation Area

Assessment

Introduction:

The proposal was originally for the display of internally illuminated fascia and projecting sign to a shopfront in a traditional streetscape in the Seven Dials Conservation Area. Following a site visit shortly after receipt of the application, it was noted that refurbishment works were being carried out. A large vinyl sign was already displayed in the window – but falling under deemed consent and therefore not included in this proposal - and the frontage was also painted.

The agent was contacted and advised that the advertisement was not to be displayed unless advert consent was granted. Discussions/negotiations took place between the case officer and the agent to have the method of illumination either removed or amended from internal to external from the proposal. However, the applicant decided to retain the internal illumination.

A subsequent site visit also confirmed that both signs have already been displayed, as being internally illuminated, without the proper consent.

Proposal:

The proposal is therefore for the display of internally illuminated fascia sign measuring 484mm x 2.50m x 100mm and projecting sign measuring 600mm x 654mm x 170mm as originally applied.

Amenity:

The proposed fascia and projecting signs in terms of size, design and location are considered appropriate and would preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the host and adjacent buildings and would be a positive addition to the street scene.

However, the method of illumination – being internally – is not acceptable and would fail to preserve the character and appearance of Seven Dials and would thus be contrary to policy DP25 which clearly states that *“the council will only permit development within conservation areas that preserves and enhances the character and appearance of the area”* and chap 25.2 *“We will seek to manage change in a way that retains the distinctive characters of our conservation areas and will expect new development to contribute positively to this. The Council will therefore only grant planning permission*

for development in Camden's conservation areas that preserves and enhances the special character or appearance of the area." and contrary to Camden Planning Guidance CPG1 stating that *"Corporate designs involving internally illuminated signs may need to be modified where they are considered unsuitable, especially in residential areas, or conservation areas, or on listed buildings."* Chap 8.13 and *"Internally illuminated box signs are discouraged. Generally, the internal illumination of individual letters, rather than the whole fascia or projecting sign on a shopfront, will be more appropriate."* Chap 8.15 e.g halo illumination.

The Conservation Area Appraisal also re-enforce the above by confirming that *"shop signage should be appropriate for the Conservation Area. Internally illuminated box signs are unacceptable and generally signage should be non-illuminated or externally illuminated"* chap SD19.

Many shopfronts contribute to the character of the area and townscape. Some, such as 1, 15 and 17 Shorts Gardens, have been identified as being "Shopfronts of merit" in the Seven Dials Conservation Area Appraisal. Number 15 and 21 Shorts Gardens have also been included in the list of buildings which make a positive contribution to the area and townscape. Some distinctive streetscape features can be found on Shorts Gardens such as bollard on the corner of 19 Shorts Gardens and granite sett carriageway with York stone footway throughout Shorts Gardens.

There are 2 very distinctive "hanging signs" at 21 Shorts Gardens, on the corner of Neal's Yard, consisting of 2 metal "hoist brackets" – which could be described as being the equivalent to projecting signs – provide highly individual signage drawing strongly from the historical brewery industry identity of the area in the 19th century and thus maintaining and contributing to the traditional requirement of the area. The brackets have been granted advert consent on 03/08/2010 (ref: 2010/3091/A).

While internally illuminated signs can be appropriate within the setting of a conservation area, the signs that have been erected are considered overly bright in the context of the area which contains subtle illumination or no illumination in some cases. The appearance of internally illuminated signage is out of character within the area, creating visual harm to the streetscene and character and appearance of the conservation area. A more subtle type of illumination for the signs may be acceptable, such as halo illumination of individual letters.

The vast majority of the existing signs are either externally illuminated or non-illuminated. Some examples can be found a few doors down from the site address such as the public house at the east end of Shorts Gardens, the shop next door at 1 Shorts Gardens and the Thomas Neal Centre opposite the site address where the fascia signs and banners are externally illuminated.

There is, however, an internally illuminated letter fascia sign at 25 Shorts Gardens/39 Neal Street. The signage was display without the proper advert consent which neither sought and is thus unauthorised.

The 2 previous advert consent applications for the site address reference: 2007/0139/A and 2008/4484/A were both refused on the basis of the method of illumination being internal. The proposed signage, in terms of the method of illumination, are not acceptable and are contrary to the policies as listed above.

Public Safety:

The proposal, as it stands, does not have a negative impact on the safety of pedestrians and road users and is not an issue to be taken into account as part of the refusal.

Conclusion:

An enforcement case has therefore been opened reference: EN14/1221

Recommendation:

The proposed internally illuminated fascia and projecting signs, by reason of their method of illumination, result overly bright advertisements out of character with their context harming the character and appearance of Seven Dials Conservation Area contrary to policies CS5, CS14 of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Core Strategy; and policies DP24 and DP25 of the London Borough of Camden Local Development Framework Development Policies.

The proposal, by reason of its method of illumination is harmful to the appearance and character of the streetscene and the Seven Dials Conservation Area. The application therefore recommended for refusal with warning of enforcement action to be taken to have both signs removed.