

Delegated Report			Expiry Date:	25/08/2016
Officer			Application Number(s)	
Matthias Gentet			2016/2888/A	
Application Address			Application Type:	
Land at St Giles Circus 126-136 Charing Cross Road London WC2H 8NJ			Advertisement Consent	
1st Signature	2nd Signature (If refusal)	Conservation	Recommendation(s):	
			Refuse Advertisement Consent	
Proposal(s)				
-Temporary display of internally illuminated LED display board signage (measuring 3m in height by 12m in with and 0.6m in depth) to Andrew Borde Street and Charing Cross Road elevation from 01/09/2016 to 23/05/2018.				
Consultations				
Summary of consultation responses:		<p>An objection was received from the Covent Garden Community Association, summarised as follow: The proposed internally illuminated advertisement is inappropriate given its proximity to several conservation areas, including Denmark Street, Bloomsbury and Seven Dials (Covent Garden) conservation areas. The sign's size, internal illumination and commercial nature are all out of keeping with the character of the area and would cause harm to the historic nature of the conservation areas.</p> <p>Additionally, the proposed signage would harm the amenity of local residents and would pose a safety hazard given its prominent location on the transport/road network.</p>		
Site Description				
<p>The site is currently a construction site sandwiched between Denmark Street to the south and Centre Point tower to the north, and in Denmark Street Conservation Area. It is implementing an approved redevelopment of the area which includes the erection a five and seven storey buildings facing the south side of the Grade II listed Centre Point.</p> <p>The application site is on the border with the London Borough of Westminster to the west, along Charing Cross Road.</p>				
Relevant History				
Site History:				
<p><u>2016/0522/A</u> – (granted on 04/04/2016) - Temporary display of a shroud with 1 x non-illuminated advertisement to Charing Cross Road and Andrew Borde Street elevations from 01/04/2016 to 01/04/2018.</p> <p><u>2014/6754/A</u> – (granted on 24/04/2015) - Temporary display of a shroud with 1 x non-illuminated advertisement to Charing Cross Road and Andrew Borde Street elevations and display of a shroud with 1 x non-illuminated advertisement to St Giles High Street and Denmark Street elevations from</p>				

01/01/2015 to 01/01/2017.

2012/6858/P – (granted on 31/03/2015) - Redevelopment involving the erection of three buildings (5 and 7 storey buildings facing Centre Point Tower and a 4 storey building on Denmark Place), to provide 2895sqm of basement Event Gallery space, exhibitions, product launches, live music (including recorded music), awards ceremonies, conferences and fashion shows (Sui Generis), urban gallery, retail, advertising, exhibitions, brand and product launches, corporate events, screenings, exhibitions and events, flexible retails and restaurant floorspace, drinking establishment (Class A4) and a 14 bedroom hotel (Class C1) between Denmark Place and Andrew Borde Street.

Adjacent Sites:

2016/0523/A – (refused on 08/04/2016 and appeal not decided as yet) - Temporary display of shroud advertisement with 1 x non illuminated advertisement on Denmark Street elevation from 01/04/2016 to 01/04/2018 - Land at St Giles Circus, 1-23 Denmark Place, 18-28 Denmark Street , 52-59 St Giles High Street.

2014/6754/A – (granted on 24/04/2015) - Temporary display of a shroud with 1 x non-illuminated advertisement to Charing Cross Road and Andrew Borde Street elevations and display of a shroud with 1 x non-illuminated advertisement to St Giles High Street and Denmark Street elevations from 01/01/2015 to 01/01/2017 - Land at St Giles Circus, 1-23 Denmark Place, 18-28 Denmark Street, 52-59 St Giles High Street and 126-136 Charing Cross Road.

2011/2591/A – (granted on 22/07/2011) - Display of 1x externally illuminated shroud and 1x non-illuminated shroud with advertising on rear and flank elevation respectively of building fronting Andrew Borde Street for a temporary period of 3 years - 1 - 6 Denmark Place and 52-55 St Giles High Street.

Other Sites within Camden:

2016/3005/A – (refused – yet to be finalised) - Display of an internally illuminated LED digital display sign and mural surround - Adjacent to Camden Town Underground Station, Camden High Street.

2015/6179/A – (refused on 01/02/2016) - Installation of 1 x digital LED display screen (3.846m x 6.596m) - Adjacent to Camden Town Underground Station, Camden High Street

2015/5215/A – (refuse on 19/11/2016) - Installation of double-sided structure to existing bus shelter no. 0107/1029 for display of digital screen and non-illuminated static poster panel - Bus Shelter outside 167-169 Camden High Street.

2015/6179/A – (refused on 01/02/2016) - Installation of 1 x digital LED display screen (3.846m x 6.596m) - Adjacent to Camden Town Underground Station, Camden High Street.

2015/3210/A – (refused on 24/08/2015 and dismissed on appeal on 18/11/2015) - Display of 1x digital display screen (6.0 x 39.8 metres) to Tottenham Court Road elevation at 1st and 2nd floor level - St Giles Hotel, Bedford Avenue.

2015/1209/A – (refused and warning of prosecution action to be taken on 24/04/2015) - Display of a digital illuminated signage measuring 6.6m x 3.4m x 0.4m at 1.9m from ground level - Adjacent to Whitefield Memorial Church, Tottenham Court Road.

2014/4102/A – (refused on 18/07/2014 and dismissed on appeal on 08/01/2014) - Display of a free standing internally illuminated sign - On the corner of York Way and Freight lane.

2014/4108/A – (refused on 18/07/2014 and dismissed on appeal on 04/12/2014) - Display of a free standing internally illuminated sign in the forecourt - British Telecom, 138 Maida Vale.

2014/3174/A – (refused on 18/07/2014) - Display of one internally illuminated fascia sign at first floor level of building - 124 Finchley Road.

2014/1027/A – (refused on 26/03/2014 and dismissed on appeal on 02/03/2015) - Erection of a free standing digital advertisement display unit - Royal Mail Delivery Office, 1 Barnby Street.

2013/8151/A – (refused on 14/02/2014 and dismissed on appeal on 27/06/2014) - Digital media display on a freestanding advertising display unit - Land adj. 135 Finchley Road.

2013/7024/A – (refused on 03/01/2014 and dismissed on appeal on 27/06/2014) - Installation of a free standing LED internally illuminated public information display sign - Jewish Community Centre, 341-3 51 Finchley Road.

2013/6400/A – (refused on 22/10/2013 and dismissed on 31/12/2013) - Display of digital screen to front elevation of hospital - University College Hospital, 235 Euston Road.

2013/2419/A – (refused on 01/07/2013 and dismissed on appeal on 11/02/2014) - Display of 1x internally illuminated advertising hoarding at second floor level to side elevation replacing existing hoarding on property - 1a New College Parade, Finchley Road.

2013/2349/A – (refused on 19/06/2013 but allowed on appeal on 10/03/2014) - The display of an internally illuminated display board to the side elevation above existing retail unit (Class A1) at first floor level – 124 Finchley Road.

2012/4564/A – (refused on 18/10/2012 and dismissed on appeal on 11/07/2013) - Display of digital screen and lettering to front elevation of hospital - University College Hospital, 235 Euston Road.

2009/2923/A – (refused on 06/10/2009) - Installation of digital LED screen (1.8m x 9.4m) at fascia level on corner of West End Lane and Blackburn Road to display advertisements (changing every 7-10 seconds) - 124 West End Lane.

2012/1491/A – (refused on 16/05/2012 and dismissed on appeal on 13/12/2012) - Erection of a double sided free standing totem with digital screens - The O2 Centre, 255 Finchley Road.

2012/0076/A – (refused on 31/05/2012 and dismissed on appeal on 11/01/2013) - Display of internally illuminated digital display panel on monopole - Land adjacent to 135 Finchley Road.

9480079 – (granted on 19/08/1994) - The display of 3 X 6 sheet 'superslim' advertisement panels on the Camden High Street frontage and 2 X 3 sheet on Kentish Town Road - Camden Town Underground Station Camden High Street.

AE9700774 – (part grant/part refused on 23/01/1998) - The display of non-illuminated signs on Camden High Street and Kentish Town Road frontages - Camden Town Underground Station, Camden High Street

The following enforcement cases are to be taken into consideration as being relevant to the refusal of this proposal, representing and supporting the Council's initiative to remove unsightly hoardings:

- EN16/0004 - Pitch outside Kings Cross Station - 2 digital boards to side elevations.
- EN15/0447 - 226 Camden High Street - Display of a large digital sign to side elevation without advert consent. Changed from a large poster board.
- EN15/0910 - Erection of illuminated animated advertising sign at 1st floor level. Previous REFUSED applications for similar at this address.
- EN09/0102 – Land adjoining 279 Finchley Road - display of two advert hoardings (Appeal against discontinuance notice dismissed: 26/02/2013)

- EN07/0473 – Central School of Speech and Drama College Crescent - Display of two advert hoardings, each 1 x 48 sheet (Appeal against discontinuance notice dismissed 21/05/2013)

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
- CS17 – Making Camden a safer place

Development Policies

- DP17 – Walking, cycling and public transport
- DP21 – Development connecting to the highway network
- 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 2015 (as amended)

CPG1 (Design) Chapter 8

National Planning Policy Framework 2012

The London Plan 2016

Denmark Street Conservation Area (Designated June 1991)

Planning Enforcement Initiative to remove unsightly advertisement hoardings in the Borough

Assessment

1. Background

- 1.1 This application is a revised proposal from the previously approved advert consent applications reference: 2014/6754/A and 2016/0522/A (see Site History above) for a LED digital internally illuminated advertisement (12m x 3m). It is to be displayed above the hoarding boards surrounding the construction site along Borde Street.
- 1.2 The previously approved applications were for non-illuminated commercial advertisement to be temporarily displayed with a shroud during the period of construction works. The advertisements were deemed acceptable by virtue of their size and lack of illumination. Should the applicant have persisted with the said commercial advertisements to be externally illuminated as it was their intention originally, both proposals would have been refused.
- 1.3 This revised application is now proposing a much smaller sign. However, by its very nature, a LED digital display board produces a full face illuminated advertisement in comparison to an typical externally illuminated hoarding board for example. The LED digital sign also produces a glare which is not present with externally illuminated signs.
- 1.4 No information has been provided in terms of the frequency of the change of images to be

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displayed which is to be set against the speed of the local traffic. It is therefore not possible to ascertain this part of the proposal.

1.5 The location site is part of the redevelopment of St Giles, approved in March 2015 (see Site History above). Major works are already taking place to the Centre Point tower and its connecting annexes, including demolition of the adjacent listed Council blocks and Public House.

2. Proposal

2.1 The proposal is seeking advert consent for the display of a LED internally illuminated digital advertisement, affixed/located above hoarding boards surrounding the construction site, and will be facing directly onto the Centre Point tower.

2.2 The LED digital signage is to measure 12m in width by 3m in height, with an advertising face measuring below 36sqm. The exact measurements of the frame itself have not been provided. Suffice to say that, regardless of the thickness of the frame being taken into consideration or not, the overall surface of the advertising face is extensive.

2.3 The chosen location for the display of the proposed LED digital signage is on the edge of a very busy traffic junction in a central part of London.

3. Amenity

3.1 Camden Planning Guidance CPG1 (Design) clearly states that *'hoarding advertising may be acceptable where they satisfactorily relate to the scale of the host building and its surroundings. Advertisements in conservation areas and on or near listed buildings require detailed consideration given the sensitivity and historic nature of these areas or buildings. Any advertisements on or near a listed building or in a conservation area must not harm their character and appearance.'*

3.2 Although the size of the proposed LED digital signage is largely smaller compared to the size of the approved commercial advertisement with shroud already approved, its design and method of illumination produce a totally different 'package' and its impact on the surrounding area in terms of development is severe, and on the setting of the listed buildings in close proximity.

3.3 The whole of St Giles is formed of listed buildings, some of them iconic (Centre Point). DP 25 clearly states that the Council will not permit development that it considers would harm the setting of a listed building. The proposed LED digital display board, by its very nature in terms of the intensity of the light it produces, is considered to be highly detrimental to the appearance and character of the streetscape, the conservation area, and harmful to the setting of all surrounding listed buildings.

3.4 Although the area - to the south of the site (Charing Cross Road) - benefit from a wide range of commercial advertisements, these are the commonly found fascia and projecting signs which are, however, at low level above or part of shopfronts, and do not produce the level of illumination and glare a LED digital display sign of such size (12m x 3m) would emit.

3.5 The presence of such a sign would be contrary to the Denmark Street Conservation Area Appraisal which clearly states that *'hoardings, because of their size and scale, are not considered acceptable forms of advertising within the conservation area. New development may increase pressure for more intensive advertising. This will be resisted where it is considered to detract from the character and appearance of the area.'*

3.6 The proposed signage would further add visual clutter to an area which is already the subject of extensive construction works with scaffold everywhere, and adding very little in terms of

'appeasing' the aggressive nature of large developments, and would be a bulky addition to the streetscape.

3.7 Policy CS14 also stresses that the Council is committed to improving Camden's streets and public spaces and encourages respect for local character and promotes high quality, clutter-free design.

3.8 The proposed digital sign, in terms of its size, design and location is not in keeping with the surrounding area and the streetscene and will create visual clutter. It is considered that the proposal would be harmful to the character and appearance of the conservation areas, Listed and adjacent buildings and the streetscape contrary to CPG1 (Design), and policies CS14 and DP25.

4. Public Safety

4.1 The Council's Transport section has been consulted on the proposal, and has raised concerns with road safety. CPG1 (Design) also clearly states that *'Advertisements will not be considered acceptable where they impact upon public safety, such as being hazardous to vehicular traffic (e.g emit glare), and that the Council is to ensure that an advertisement does not become unduly dominant in the streetscene, disturb adjoining residents at night, or cause safety hazards to drivers, consideration.'*

4.2 Taking into account the advertising face area of the proposed LED digital display board which, as stated in paragraph 2.2 above would cover an area just below 36sqm, once illuminated the glare emitted from the board would distract vehicular drivers. This is particularly concerning as the site is located in the very busy Central London Area which has high volumes of cyclists, pedestrians and other vulnerable road users. The board will introduce an unnecessary hazard and will have a detrimental effect on road safety within the area.

5. Conclusion

5.1 The proposed digital sign, by reason of its size, siting and method of illumination would result in an overly dominant addition which would be highly detrimental to the appearance and character of the streetscape and adjoining station building and would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Camden Town Conservation Area contrary to Core Strategy Policies CS5 (Managing the impact of growth) and CS14 (Promoting high quality places and conserving our heritage) and Development Policies DP24 (Securing high quality design), DP25 (Conserving Camden's Heritage) and DP26 (Managing the impact of development on occupiers and neighbours) of Camden's Local Development Framework and paragraphs 14, 17, 56 -67, 126 -141 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

5.2 The proposed digital sign, by reason of its size, siting and method of illumination close to a road and busy junction, would be likely to distract driver's attention on the approach to Borde Street to the detriment of highway and pedestrian safety, contrary to Development Policies DP21 (Development connecting to the highway network) of Camden's Local Development Framework and paragraphs 14, 17, 56 -67, 126 -141 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

6. Recommendation

6.1 The application is recommended for refusal.