

<b>Delegated Report</b>			<b>Expiry Date:</b>	<b>22/07/2016</b>
<b>Officer</b>			<b>Application Number(s)</b>	
Matthias Gentet			2016/3005/A	
<b>Application Address</b>			<b>Application Type:</b>	
Adjacent to Camden Town Underground Station Camden High Street London NW1 8NH			Advertisement Consent	
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Signature</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Signature (If refusal)</b>	<b>Conservation</b>	<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	
			Refuse Advertisement Consent	
<b>Proposal(s)</b>				
Display of an internally illuminated LED digital display sign and mural surround.				

## Consultations

### Summary of consultation responses:

A comment from the **Camden Town CAAC** has been received, summarised as follow:

We do not usually approve advertisements but this hoarding covers an unsightly gap between the tube station and the taller building. The mural is also rather good.

We only have two suggestions:

- The hoarding should be slightly higher to conceal the gap.
- The actual digital screen should be centred, if that is at all possible. It is rather odd to place the screen to one side.

A comment from **Transport for London** has been received, summarised as follow:

From a highway safety perspective TfL does not object to the principle of the se proposals however, the following is recommended:

- o The minimum time between successive displayed images shall be 10 seconds.
- o The sequencing of messages relating to the same product is prohibited.
- o The intensity of the illuminance of the advertising signs shall be no greater than 300Cdm2 during hours of darkness.
- o No special visual effects of any kind are permitted during the time that any message is displayed.
- o The displayed image must not include animated, flashing, scrolling, in termittent or video elements.
- o No visual effects of any kind to be permitted to accompany the transiti on between any two successive messages. The replacement image must not incorporate any fading, swiping or other animated transitiona l method.
- o The proposed display will include a default mechanism to freeze and i magine in the event of a malfunction.

### Officer's Response:

*The proposed mural could be viewed as an acceptable solution to remedy the dilapidated timber cladding boards used to hide the site at the rear of Camden Town Station. However, because of the location, a mural of this size would not necessarily be an effective and long lasting solution.*

*The presence of street art in various places around Camden Town cannot set a precedent of the approval of mural in such a prominent location.*

*The LED digital signage board is too large and dominant feature to be installed in location where it is to be 'encased' in a fairly narrow one way street, despite the generous size of the pavements. The level of illumination would be such that it would render the signage excessively bright and an incongruous feature.*

## Site Description

The application site is location to the east side of the market part of Camden High Street, sandwiched between Camden Town Underground Station and a tall three-storey commercial building, and is formed of a timber clad fence already adorning a non-illuminated advertisement.

The site is in a Camden Town Conservation Area but is not listed.

## Relevant History

### Site History:

2015/6179/A – (refused on 01/02/2016) - Installation of 1 x digital LED display screen (3.846m x 6.596m).

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

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.

### Adjacent Sites:

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.

### Other Sites within Camden:

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.

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

2012/1491/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.

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.

2014/1027/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.

2013/6400/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.

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.

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:

- 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**

### **Camden Town Conservation Area (Designated 03/1997)**

## **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 refused advert consent application reference: 2015/6179/A (see Site History above) for a slightly larger LED digital internally illuminated advertisement (3.846m x 6.596m). It was located at a higher position than the existing non-illuminated advertising board, protruding above the timber fence by approximately 1.1m.
- 1.2 The proposal was considered to be detrimental to the appearance and character of the streetscape and the conservation area. By virtue of its size, sitting and method of illumination, it would have resulted in an overly dominant addition.
- 1.3 The revised proposal has been reduced in size, and is sited in the same location as the existing non-illuminated signage board currently in situ. The proposed mural will replace the existing dilapidated timber cladded fencing, and will draw on the local features and associated references representing Camden Town.
- 1.4 Advert consent for the present advertising hoarding board has not been found through the planning history search.

### **2. Proposal**

- 2.1 The proposal is seeking advert consent for the display of a LED internally illuminated digital advertisement, affixed to the timber cladded fencing located by Camden Town Underground Station and fronting Camden High Street. The timber fencing would be replaced by a mural which will represent a bright and multi coloured background.
- 2.2 The LED digital signage would measure 6.39m in width by 3.34m in height (this includes the frame), with an advertising area measuring 6.09m in width by 3.04m in height.
- 2.3 The proposed signage will be internally illuminated with static images being displayed, changing at various frequencies. The applicant has stated the frequency to be for each static image to be displayed for 7.5 seconds.
- 2.4 The mural is to cover the existing timber cladded fence in its entirety, measuring 5.8m in height by 11.3m in width. The mural will have images of local well known landmarks such as

the bridge at the end of Camden High Street, Dr Martin's boot, a statue from the Cyberdog, people etc... producing a patchwork of local themes.

### 3. Visual 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. Although the size of the proposed LED digital signage is only marginally larger compared to the size of the existing hoarding board, its design and method of illumination would be considered to detract from the character and appearance of the immediate area.
- 3.2 The adjacent Camden Town Underground Station, though not a listed building, has been identified in the Camden Town Conservation Area appraisal as being a positive contributor to the streetscape. An illuminated board of this size, producing a full lighted face of considerable intensity, in complete contrast to the existing non-illuminated hoarding board, would detract from the value of the station's appearance and therefore have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 3.3 The area benefits for a wide range of commercial advertisement, from the traditional fascia and projecting signs commonly found on shopfronts to the more artistic and elaborate designs of signage (either non-illuminated or externally illuminated) located at the upper levels of the frontages all along the northern end of Camden High Street, giving the high street its distinctive and quirky identity. However the Council seeks to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area and the introduction of the proposed large internally illuminated LED digital display board would be an incongruous feature that would not in keeping with this part of Camden High Street and will create visual clutter.
- 3.4 The presence of such a signage would be contrary to the Camden Town 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.'*
- 3.5 The proposed signage would also add further visual clutter to an already busy commercial high street in terms of advertisement, including banner advertising on lamp posts. This accumulation of advertisement would only detract from character and appearance of the street.
- 3.6 It must be noted that the presence of a similar LED digital display boards to the side elevation of 226 Camden High Street is the subject of an enforcement case which is still ongoing. Its display is unauthorised, and its retention would be refused if advert consent was to be applied for.
- 3.7 The artistic mural proposed around the proposed signage, as showing on one of the photomontages, reflects the true nature of the area and what makes this part of Camden Town unique and the focal point of any visitors coming to London. The depiction of iconic local themes and features – the bridge over the canal, the railway bridge at the end of Camden High Street, the metal 'totem' representing the Cyberdog in The Stables Market – and the fashion and music typical to Camden Town is an interesting display very much in keeping with the Camden Town identity of the area, and as such, would be a positive artistic contribution to the neglected wall and to the highstreet.
- 3.8 The artistic mural is considered to be acceptable in terms of size, design and location. However, it isn't possible to comment on the material to be used as these have not been stated anywhere within the submission.
- 3.9 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 to make streets and public places that are safe and easy to use for all. The proposal is contrary to the latter statement and is deemed to be unacceptable for reasons detailed above.

- 3.10 Special attention has been paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area, under s.72 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 as amended by the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act (ERR) 2013.

#### 4. Public Safety

4.1 Camden Development Policy DP21 (Development connecting to the highway network) sets out the Council's expectations for development linking directly to both the highway network and to the Council's own highway management works. The term highway includes all footpaths and cycleways in the borough (including those not alongside roads) that are managed by the Council or Transport for London as Highway Authority. Paragraph 21.2 states that the Council has a duty to provide for the efficient movement of vehicles and pedestrians on the road network. We do this by enabling and promoting walking, cycling and public transport.

4.2 The summary page of DP21 states that the Council will expect works affecting highways to:

- (i) avoid disruption to the highway network and its function.
- (ii) address the needs of wheelchair users and other people with mobility difficulties, people with sight impairments, children, elderly people and other vulnerable users.
- (iii) avoid causing harm to highway safety or hinder pedestrian movement and avoid unnecessary street clutter.

4.3 There are concerns raised by the Council's Transport officers that the proposed advertisement display board will have a detrimental effect on public safety on the highway. Drivers heading northbound on Camden High Street may be distracted by the proposed advertisement which could lead to conflicts with pedestrians, cyclists and other vulnerable road users. The site is located next to the exit of Camden Town Underground station and as a result the footway is often congested. Pedestrians seeking to cross Camden High Street do not always use dedicated crossings and any proposal that could cause a distraction to drivers under these circumstances are contrary to policy DP21.

4.4 In addition, there are concerns that the illumination from the advertisement will cause unnecessary glare into vehicular mirrors, thus having further detrimental impact on public safety.

4.5 It is proposed in the applicant's Usage Regime Information document that each static image will be displayed for a minimum length of time based on a traffic speed of **30mph for Camden High Street** using the formula devised by TfL's policy document: 'Guidance for Digital Roadside Advertising and Proposed Best Practice – 2013'.

4.6 As Camden High Street operates a 20mph speed restriction, using the formula devised by TfL for a 20mph road, each static image should be displayed for 11.5 seconds instead of the proposed 7.5 seconds if the advert was considered acceptable in all other respects.

#### 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 detrimental to the appearance and character of the streetscape and the 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

## **6. Recommendation**

6.1 The application is recommended for refusal.