

Delegated Report		Expiry Date:	03/10/2016
Officer		Application Number(s)	
Matthias Gentet		2016/4335/A	
Application Address		Application Type:	
1 Tower Street London WC2H 9NP		Advertisement Consent	
1st Signature	2nd Signature (If refusal)	Conservation	Recommendation(s):
			Refuse Advertisement Consent with Warning of Prosecution Action to be Taken
Proposal(s)			
Display of 3 x internally illuminated fascia and 2 x internally illuminated projecting signs.			

Consultations

Summary of consultation responses:

An objection was received from an **Owner/occupier at Flat 11, 4-10 Tower Street, WC2H 9NP**, summarised as follow:

- The 'coffee cup' with '£1' superimposed is particularly unpleasant.
- Signage generally appears totally out of keeping with the Seven Dials Conservation Area policy.

An objection was received from an **Owner/occupier at Flat 2, 68A Neal Street, WC2H 9PA**, summarised as follow:

- Proposal will seriously detract from the character of the Seven Dials Conservation Area.
- The Seven Dial Conservation Area Appraisal states that internally illuminated box signs are unacceptable and signage usually consists of one fascia and one projecting sign.
- The internal illumination violates this policy.
- The projecting signs are significantly larger than the existing.
- Plans demonstrate over-signage in both scale and numbers.
- Previous signage did not enhance the conservation area and any replacement should be an opportunity to improve, not further deterioration.

An objection was received from the **Covent Garden Community Association (CGCA)**, summarised as follow:

- Objecting to the internal illumination which is inappropriate and unsympathetic in a conservation area.
- Seven Dials Conservation Area Appraisal states that 'signage should be non-illuminated or externally illuminated'.

Officer's Response:

The signage is considered unacceptable. The projecting signs are bulky, unattractive, and have the '£1' price included in design which is permitted. Only the design of a logo or business name can be or form part of any signage.

The fascia signs are too large, too thick and as a result protrude out too much.

The amount of signage is excessive and is creating visual clutter. This is exacerbated by the bulky size and scale of the individual signs.

The method of illumination should either be external or have only internally 'Halo' illuminated individual letters. Not those large plastic box signs that is totally unsuited for the traditional identity of the area.

The presence of a large number of listed buildings is requiring a far more stringent approach to this type of application where the design as well as the method of illumination must ensure that the development is not to harm the setting of those listed building which, in this particular case, is clearly not respected.

Site Description

The site is a ground floor commercial unit operating as a coffee shop, part of a 4-storey red brick modern building on the corner of Tower Street and Earlham Street, with offices at upper level. Although the building is not listed, it is within Seven Dial Conservation Area which has retained its historical and traditional character and identity, and was given 'Outstanding Status' by the Secretary of State in the 1970s.

Seven Dials has a unique street plan with a consistency of high quality architectural design which are distinctive and of high standards. The special character of the Conservation Area is found in the range and mix of building types and uses and the street layout. The character is not dominated by one particular period or style of building but rather it is their combination that is of special interest.

Relevant History

Site Address:

There is no recent planning history relevant to this application

Enforcement History of the Site Address:

EN16/0756 - New illuminated signage installed.

Adjacent Sites:

2016/4002/A – (granted on 08/08/2016) - Display of two externally illuminated projecting signs at first floor level - 1 Fielding Court, 28 Earlham Street.

2016/1532/A – (granted on 21/06/2016) - Display of 1 x externally illuminated fascia sign to Tower Court elevation, 1 x externally illuminated fascia to Earlham Street elevation - 24 Earlham Street.

2016/2037/L - (granted on 21/06/2016) - Installation of signage and lights to the Earlham Street and Tower Court elevations - 24 Earlham Street.

2015/5148/P – (granted 18/11/2015) - Installation of replacement shopfront - 4-10 Tower Street.

2015/5408/A – (granted on 18/11/2015) - Display of bronze fascia sign, 3x plaques and 7x projecting signs - 4-10 Tower Street.

2015/1975/A – (granted on 09/04/2015) - Display of 1 x non-illuminated fascia sign and 1 x non-illuminated projecting sign - 15 Shorts Gardens.

2014/7013/A – (refused with Warning of Enforcement Action to be Taken on 19/12/2014 and dismissed on appeal (Ref: APP/X5210/Z/15/3002804) on 21/05/2015) - Display of internally illuminated fascia and projecting signs - 13 Shorts Gardens.

2013/1410/A – (granted on 03/05/2013) - Display of one non-illuminated hanging sign at ground floor level on front elevation of shop - 16 Earlham Street.

Relevant Enforcement History:

EN16/0282 - Unauthorised internally illuminated box projecting sign and change of colour scheme to listed building (shop at ground floor level) - 22 Earlham Street.

EN16/0280 - Unauthorised display of illuminated fascia sign, internally illuminated projecting sign to first floor level, 4 x spotlight under fascia and 2 x lights above fascia - 26 Earlham Street.

EN15/0363 - Internally illuminated signage displayed without advert consent. In a CA and traditional non-illuminated or externally illuminated signage would only be approved - 39 Neal Street.

EN14/1221 - Display of internally illuminated fascia and projecting signs without advert consent - 13

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 2015 (as amended)

CPG1 (Design) Chapter 7 & 8

Seven Dials Conservation Area Appraisal (1998)

Planning Enforcement Initiative to remove unsightly advertisement hoardings in the Borough

1. Background

- 1.1 The 3no internally illuminated fascia signs and 2no internally illuminated projecting signs are already in situ.
- 1.2 They are accompanied by the display of a large circular non-illuminated sign affixed to the left hand side shopfront elevation on Earlham Street, advertising the price of a cup of coffee with a large '£1' in its centre. Although this sign is non-illuminated, its size would require advert consent, being in a conservation area. However, advertising a price instead of the name of the business, this type of sign would not be permitted to be displayed.
- 1.3 There are also symbols of the products on offer on non-illuminated boards affixed to the sides of the recessed glazing window on the right hand side of the shopfront on Earlham Street. These, similarly to the above '£1' sign in paragraph 1.2, are not advertising the name of the business but the products being sold on the premises, and as such, advert consent would not be granted.
- 1.4 An enforcement case has been opened as a result of the unauthorised display of the signage forming part of this application under reference: EN16/0756.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 This proposal is seeking advert consent for the display of 3no Internally illuminated fascia (2 on Earlham Street elevation and the third one on Tower Street Elevation) and 2no internally illuminated projecting signs (one on Earlham Street elevation on the dividing brick section of the shopfront, and the other on the left hand side of the Tower Street elevation). Both projecting signs are set above fascia level.

3. Visual Amenity

Projecting Signs:

- 3.1 The internally illuminated projecting signs measure 830mm in width (including the fixing bracket), 846mm in height and 180mm in depth, one is affixed on the left hand side of the shopfront return elevation on Tower Street, and the other on the first pillar of the shopfront elevation on Earlham Street. Both are set above fascia level, just under a concrete soffit.
- 3.2 The proposed projecting signs are large and bulky, unattractive and incongruous fixtures in this traditional highstreet. They are internally illuminated and designed in the shape of a cup of coffee with the '£1' as part of the design of the sign which is not actually advertising the name of the business, but simply advertising the price of a cup of coffee.
- 3.3 Camden's policy CS14 confirms that '*the Council will ensure that Camden requires development of the highest standards of design that respects local context and character, preserving and enhancing Camden's rich and diverse heritage assets and their settings, including conservation areas, listed buildings.*' The design of the projecting signs is considered unacceptable. It is not traditional, and does not respect the historic identity of the area. Non-illuminated blade signs with the name of the business or the simple design of a cup of coffee are what would normally be expected.
- 3.4 They are also located above fascia level which is contrary to Camden Planning Guidance CPG1 (Design) which states that '*Advertisements will only be acceptable at fascia level or*

below.

- 3.5. The projecting signs are an incongruous addition which does not befit the area. The host building is modern in design, but any given development must ensure that it preserves and enhances the attractiveness the building. The projecting features are creating visual cluttering to the elevations and the streetscape
- 3.6 The proposed internally illuminated projecting signs, by virtue of their size, scale, design, location, material used and method of illumination, are considered to be detrimental to the appearance and character of the host building, streetscene, and the conservation area contrary to the Council's policies as detailed above.

Fascia Signs:

- 3.7 The internally illuminated fascia signs measure 1.32m in width by 0.69m in height by 0.10m in depth, 2.55m in width by 0.69m in height by 0.10m in depth, and 4.50m in width by 0.69 in height by 0.10m in depth respectively. These are to be displayed at fascia level on the return elevation on Tower Street, and 2no on Earlham Street elevation.
- 3.8 The fascia sign on the Tower Street elevation is also adorned with the '£1' design present on the projecting signs and the round non-illuminated board sign that, though not part of this application would require advert consent. [*Please refer to paragraph 1.2 for further details*].
- 3.9 The internally illuminated fascia signs are bulky and unattractive additions to the street. Their depth is excessive and projects beyond the brick wall elevation by a large majority – approx. 90% on Tower Street elevation which is unacceptable.

Method of illumination:

- 3.10 Seven Dials has retained its traditional identity, and one of these features is the lack of illumination of signage which dominates the area. Some externally illuminated signs can be found but are far and few between. Many shopfronts dates from the late 18th and 19th century. The Seven Dials Conservation Area Appraisal clearly states that '*Internally illuminated box signs are unacceptable and generally signage should be non-illuminated*'.
- 3.11 As such, the method of illumination, being internal, is totally unacceptable for the location.

4. Public Safety

- 4.1 There is no issue with the Public Safety aspect of this proposal. The signage applied for is of standard fascia and projecting signs which wouldn't not affect or compromise the safety of the public.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The proposed internally illuminated fascia signs and internally illuminated projecting signs by virtue of their size, design, materials, siting and method of illumination would result in overly dominant and incongruous additions which would be detrimental to the appearance and character of the host buildings, 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 Camden's Local Development Framework.

6. Recommendation

6.1 Refuse with Warning of Prosecution Action to be taken