

25 June 2022

Planning - Development Control,
Camden Council,
Camden Town Hall,
London,
WC1H 8ND

edgeplan

7 Charlotte Street
Manchester
M1 4DZ
0161 228 2226
info@edgeplan.co.uk
www.edgeplan.co.uk

Our ref: EP1566/SE
Your ref: PP-11354280

Dear Sirs

**ERECTION OF VISUAL DISPLAY SCREEN FOR A TEMPORARY PERIOD (SIX WEEKS)
KING'S CROSS SQUARE, EUSTON ROAD, LONDON N1 9AL
PLANNING PERMISSION AND LISTED BUILDING CONSENT**

I refer to the above applications, submitted today via the Planning Portal. The applications propose the erection of a temporary Visual Display Screen to be placed on the Square outside King's Cross Station, facing the station and visible from the pedestrianised area outside. In detail, the following are enclosed:

- Application Forms and Certificate
- CIL Additional Information Form
- Site Location Plan
- Details of Display Screen and plinth
- Details of Fuel Cube
- Display Screen Images

The application fee of £234.00 has been paid online.

THIS LETTER CONTAINS DETAILS IN SUPPORT OF THE APPLICATION, AND IT SHOULD BE UPLOADED WITH THE APPLICATION DOCUMENTS. IT CONTAINS A HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

THE APPLICATION SITE

The application proposes the location of the Visual Display Screen on the square at the front of King's Cross Station. This area is currently hard surfaced and performs a number of functions. It acts as a public access to the station and Underground entrances; it houses a shop in a building on the southern side; it contains occasional market/food stalls; and it provides congregation/informal seating space.

The Square is separated from the public footpath (and the bus stops on Euston Road) by substantial bollards. Pedestrian crossing facilities are provided at the junction of Euston Road with Pancras Road and York Way.

King's Cross Station and the adjacent St Pancras Station are both Grade I listed buildings, and the Great Northern Hotel on the western edge of the Square is a Grade II listed building. The Square forms part of the King's Cross Conservation Area.

Page 1 of 4



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Registered Office Reedham House 31 King Street West, Manchester M3 2PJ



PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

C-Screens Limited, the UK's largest outdoor TV network propose to erect a 5m (diag) Visual Display Screen in order to entertain passers-by with a Summer of Sport, bringing enlivenment to the Kings Cross area. The screen will show various sports including Wimbledon Tennis and 100-ball Cricket and the 2022 Commonwealth Games. There will be no football coverage.

The screen will be in place temporarily between Sunday 26th June 2022 and Sunday 7th August 2022. It will be switched on between the hours of 8am and 7pm.

There are no power facilities in the Square for temporary events. The screen will therefore be run on a generator which will be housed within the plinth below. A diesel fuel storage tank will be situated behind the screen with sufficient capacity to serve the duration of the project.

PLANNING POLICY

Planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case the development plan comprises The Camden Local Plan which was adopted in July 2017 and the London Plan 2021 adopted in March 2021. There are no neighbourhood planning forums or areas in Camden covering the location in which the application site is situated.

Camden Local Plan 2031

The application site is identified on the Local Plan Proposals Map as Open Space (Ref. 290, King's Cross Square), It is also situated within the High Speed 2 Safeguarding Area.

Policy A1 deals with managing the impact of development. It requires all development to protect the quality of life of occupiers and neighbours. Proposals should protect the amenity of communities, occupiers and neighbours; contribute towards strong and successful communities; and assess and address transport impacts. Mitigation measures may be required where necessary.

Policy A2 relates to open space, to which the Council aims to protect, enhance and improve access. Designated public and private open spaces will be protected and development which would be detrimental to their setting will be resisted. Small scale development which is associated with the use of the land as open space and contributes to its use and enjoyment by the public will exceptionally be supported where it meets a demonstrable need.

Policy D2 addresses heritage including conservation areas and listed buildings which will be preserved and, where appropriate, enhanced. Harm that is less than substantial to the significance of a designated heritage asset will not be permitted unless the public benefits of the proposal convincingly outweigh that harm.

London Plan 2021

Policy GG1 seeks to build strong and inclusive communities through growth including strong and inclusive communities. Access should be provided to good quality community spaces, services, amenities and infrastructure where all Londoners can enjoy the opportunities the city provides. Policy GG2 seeks to make the best use of land and Policy GG3 to creating a healthy city.

Policy HC1 requires development proposals affecting heritage assets, and their settings, to conserve their significance, avoid harm and identify enhancement opportunities.

HERITAGE STATEMENT

The application site is in a prominent location within the King's Cross Conservation Area, closely related to the two railway stations which are Grade I Listed and therefore of exceptional special architectural or historic interest.

The Conservation Area is described in a Statement published in June 2004. It contains some of the most important historic buildings and structures in the country and has areas of great interest and variety. King's Cross station dates from 1852, the Great Northern Hotel from 1854, and St Pancras Station from 1865-69. The Midland Grand Hotel was built in front of the station with the hotel occupying the floors above in 1868-76, developed as direct competition for the Great Northern Hotel.

King's Cross Station was designed by Lewis Cubitt, and completed in 1852. When it opened, it was the largest railway station in Britain. The Great Northern Hotel was also designed by Lewis Cubitt, and completed in 1854. It is an early surviving example of a grand railway hotel, built by the Great Northern Railway for long-distance travellers. After the completion of King's Cross Station by the Great Northern Railway, the Midland Railway began the development of St Pancras Station in 1864. When constructed, the station roof, designed by the engineer William Barlow, was the world's largest single span station roof without internal support. The station opened for passengers in 1868.

King's Cross Square, as currently configured was created following the demolition of the single-storey ticket office and canopy structure to the front of the station southern canopy. This was constructed in 1974 and obstructed the full view of the station's southern elevation. The area immediately in front of the station was created as a new public space of the highest quality, which integrates the surrounding buildings. The triangular space includes hard landscaping and affords views of the façade to King's Cross Station, the flank elevation to St Pancras Station, the eastern tower to the former Midland Grand Hotel and the flank and rear of the Great Northern Hotel.

The erection of the temporary Visual Display Screen will be prominently located in the Square, and highly visible in views from the station entrance. It will also feature in views of surrounding buildings, including those of outstanding heritage quality. It will however also be seen in the context of the single storey pavilion style café building in the southern part of the Square which lies adjacent to the Underground entrance which shares a similar modern design character. The creation of the Square in 2013 also included innovative LED lighting towers, granite benches and two small planting areas

The nature of the display screen, which will be illuminated during daytime hours only, will introduce a modern element into this historic environment which is of national significance. However the temporary nature of the screen, which will not require excavation or permanent works to the Square is only anticipated to cause limited harm to the special architectural and historic interest of the area and to the significance of the listed buildings through its effect on their setting.

This will amount to less than substantial harm, which should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

This section sets out how the proposed development accords with the development plan policies identified above.

The Principle of the Proposed Use

The proposal seeks to locate the Visual Display Screen in a prominent location where it will provide entertainment to passers-by and people using the Square. It will contribute to the vitality of the area

and towards the creation of a strong and successful community. In this respect it will accord with Local Plan Policy A1 and London Plan Policy GG1.

Relationship to the Open Space

The proposed screen will occupy only a small part of the designated open space for a limited six-week period. One of the principal roles of the Square is to provide congregation/informal seating space where entertainment is occasionally provided including fairground rides, food stalls, and entertainment for the local community.

The screen, which will show a Summer of Sport programme for a temporary period, will contribute to this entertainment role – adding to rather than detracting from its use and enjoyment by the public.

Local Policy A2 allows for small scale development which is associated with the use of the land as open Space, where it meets a demonstrable need. That need is demonstrated by the ability to create a strong and successful community and the importance of encouraging community cohesion in the period following the Covid-19 lockdowns of 2020 and 2021.

Heritage Impact

The introduction of a modern, illuminated entertainment feature in the Square will have an effect on the relationship with the character of the conservation area, as well as with the important listed buildings which surround it. This will be a relationship of mixed virtue – on one hand the modernity of the feature will conflict with the historic nature of its surroundings. On the other hand it will contribute positively to the use and vitality of the area, assimilating amongst the other 21st century features.

Arguably, even a permanent feature of this type would cause less than substantial harm in this context, however the temporary nature of the development – which will be removed entirely after six weeks, will reduce the impact and associated harm yet further.

The less than substantial harm caused should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, which include its positive contribution to community cohesion in the locality. For this reason, the harm caused is considered not to conflict with Local Plan Policy D2 or London Plan Policy HC1.

CONCLUSION

The proposed temporary Visual Display Screen to be placed on the Square outside King’s Cross Station will entertain passers-by with a Summer of Sport, bringing enlivenment to the Kings Cross area and the Square at its heart. Limited to a six-week period and to daytime hours (8am – 7pm), the screen will contribute to the vitality of the area and the entertainment role of the Square without detracting from the role of this important open space. Although closely related to heritage assets of exceptional special architectural or historic interest, it will cause less than substantial harm, outweighed by public benefits. For these reasons, planning permission should be granted.

Yours faithfully



Steve Edgeller DipTP MRTPI
steve.edgeller@edgeplan.co.uk

