



Officer Report

Application Number: HGY/2024/0708
Application Type: Consent to display an advertisement
Address: 203-209 Muswell Hill Broadway, Hornsey, London, N10 3RQ
Proposal: Replacement of internally illuminated fascia, projecting and ATM signs
Case Officer: Emily Whittredge
Valid Date: 14/03/2024
Applicant: Nationwide Building Society
Agent: Holly De-Buriette

RECOMMENDATION

Refuse

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND LOCATION DETAILS

Proposed development

This is an application for advertisements to the ground floor commercial frontage comprising one fascia advertisement of aluminium box frame with internally illuminated acrylic letters / logo and a projecting sign with internally illuminated acrylic logo and keyline illumination along the return. Other minor works are proposed including replacement decals, manifestation and replacement ATM frame.

Site and Surroundings

The application relates to the commercial ground floor unit within a terrace situated on the northwest side of Muswell Hill Broadway. The site is close to the junction with Queens Avenue and lies within the designated Muswell Hill Conservation Area.

Relevant Planning and Enforcement history

The most recent planning history in relation to the site is as follows.

HGY/2018/0355

Advertisement Consent for replacement signage comprising; internally illuminated logo and text on enlarged aluminium fascia panel to replace existing (shorter) fascia panel; internally illuminated

projection sign; replacement ATM surround; statutory sign, switch vinyl, and and grey vinyl 'cover' on glazed side panels adjacent to Entrance Door
Approve with Conditions 20/03/2018

LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS

None

MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Regulation 3(1) of The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisement) Regulations 2007 states that a local planning authority shall exercise its powers under these Regulations in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking into account the provisions of the development plan, so far as they are material; and any other relevant factors.

The definition of "amenity" includes both visual and aural amenity. Therefore, as well as visual amenity, the noise generated by advertisements should be considered. "Public safety" is not confined to road safety. Crime prevention and detection are relevant; the obstruction of highway surveillance cameras, speed cameras and security cameras by advertisements is now included.

The revised NPPF (2023) states in Paragraph 141 that "the quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed. A separate consent process within the planning system controls the display of advertisements, which should be operated in a way which is simple, efficient and effective. Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts."

The main considerations in the assessment of this application are therefore amenity and public safety. In this respect DM Policy DM3 'Public Realm' states that proposals for all advertisements should be designed to a high standard and, in particular, should: a Contribute to a safe and attractive environment; b Be of a high quality and sensitive to its visual appearance on the building on which it is to be sited and the surrounding street scene, especially in the case of listed buildings and conservation areas; c Avoid unsightly proliferation or clutter of signage in the vicinity; d Not cause a hazard to pedestrians or road users, including by siting and design; e Be sited to avoid visual intrusion of light pollution into adjoining residential properties; f Where appropriate, be constructed of materials and finishes which discourage both graffiti and fly posting.

Amenity

DM Policy (2017) DM1 'Delivering High Quality Design' states that development proposals should relate positively to their locality, having regard to building heights, form, scale & massing prevailing around the site, urban grain, sense of enclosure and, where appropriate, following existing building lines, rhythm of any neighbouring or local regular plot and building widths, active, lively frontages to the public realm, and distinctive local architectural styles, detailing and materials. Policy DM8 states that the council will grant consent for shopfront signage where it contributes to an attractive environment and does not contribute to clutter or a loss of amenity; or adversely impact the character or appearance of a conservation area.

The Muswell Hill Conservation Area Appraisal stipulates that: "shopfronts of merit and other elements of interest should be retained wherever possible. New shopfronts and fascias should be sympathetic to the proportions and balance of the overall frontage. Signage should have clear simple lettering of an appropriate size and be contained within the fascia. Prominent shopfront security (roller shutters), fixed plastic canopies and internally illuminated box signs should be avoided."

The document notes that the area has been harmed by inappropriately proportioned fascias (too wide, too deep or covering arched openings); inappropriate signage on the fascias (internally illuminated boxes, oversized lettering and signboards); and a visual clutter of advertisements.

The host building forms part of an attractive terrace comprising Nos. 91 to 217 (odd) that makes a positive contribution to the conservation area. It was originally known as Queens Parade and bears an 1897 date stone. While most original shopfronts have been lost, No. 135 Martyn's traditional grocer is cited in the Muswell Hill Conservation Area appraisal document as retaining its complete interior fittings; the exterior shopfront appears indicative of the traditional design and proportions including the fascia. Existing signage varies in quality and there are multiple inappropriate examples in the parade, but it is evident that the fascia would have originally been sited high and fully between the capitals as seen at Nos. 135, 123 and 155, among others.

The application seeks to replace the existing signage with an aluminium fascia panel with internally illuminated individual acrylic letters and a 500mm internally illuminated projecting sign. The submitted drawings are inconsistent and show the proposed fascia as being either 885mm or 999mm high. The current signage was approved under ref. HGY/2018/0355 and includes an internally illuminated logo and text on an aluminium fascia panel and an internally illuminated projecting sign. The current fascia sign hangs partly below the capital in order to cover the internal ceiling, which was lowered in modern times, and there is a blank band of stone above. The previous sign was sited high with a blank band of stone below.

The proposed replacement fascia would be 0.4m narrower/lower than the existing, but still hanging partly below the capitals and further away from the original 'correct' fascia position. In addition, by lowering the top of the fascia, it would appear less aligned with the higher neighbouring signs at Nos. 197 and 211 and result in a cluttered appearance on the frontage.

Internally illuminated signage is contrary to management principles of the conservation area appraisal and the individual letter faces, logo and the keyline strip are translucent acrylic, which is not considered an appropriate material. While acrylic signage was granted in 2018, new signage should aim to preserve or enhance the conservation area, having regard to the design, proportions and materials of the host building. The other elements of the proposal including replacement ATM surround, decals, manifestation and re-spraying post box and door frames, are very minor and would not impact the conservation area.

Prior to this decision, officers requested that the narrow fascia sign be located higher to preserve the rhythm across the terrace, and an alternative design option was proposed, with fascia size and location similar to the existing but with larger lettering to maintain proportions for branding purposes. While this had the slight benefit of being taller and therefore closer to the correct fascia position, the sign would still be sited too low and furthermore, the larger letters and projecting sign were less appropriate for the conservation area, so on balance was also considered unacceptable.

The size of the proposed 999mm high signage and lettering in itself is considered proportionate and appropriate for this location, but the positions of the signs, the use of acrylic and the internal illumination are materially harmful and conflict with the historic character of the terrace and wider conservation area. These inappropriate characteristics together would cumulatively cause increased harm to the conservation area. Other existing examples within the conservation area using inappropriate materials, internal illumination and that are too low or too large, demonstrate the harm to the street scene caused by signage of this nature and are not considered to justify further similar developments where they conflict with current policies and conservation area design guidance.

The luminance levels and siting of the signage are not considered to result in undue harm to the amenity of neighbouring residential properties and is acceptable in this regard.

Public safety

Policy DM8 of the Development Management DPD 2017 requires that new signage will not cause a public safety hazard.

The illumination of the signage would have a maximum luminance level of 250 cdm², which does not exceed the limits set out in ILP Professional Lighting Guide 05 and is considered not to cause a public safety hazard in terms of illumination.

The projecting sign would not be lower than 2.4 metres above the public highway and is therefore not considered to be harmful to public safety.

Conclusion

The proposed advertisements, by reason of their siting, materials and internal illumination, would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, contrary to Policies SP1, and SP12 of the Haringey Local Plan 2017 and Policies DM3, DM8 and DM9 of The Development Management DPD 2017 and Policies D8 and HC1 of the London Plan 2021.

All other relevant policies and considerations, including equalities, have been taken into account. Consent should be refused for the reasons set out above. The details of the decision are set out in the RECOMMENDATION

RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT

For the following reason(s):

Refusal Reasons:

The proposed advertisements, by reason of their siting, materials and internal illumination, would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Muswell Hill Conservation Area, contrary to Policies SP11 and SP12 of the Haringey Local Plan 2017 and Policies DM3, DM8 and DM9 of The Development Management DPD 2017 and Policies D8 and HC1 of the London Plan 2021.