

PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

Development Management Service
Planning and Development Division
Environment and Regeneration Department
PO Box 333
222 Upper Street
London N1 1YA

PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE B		
Date:	25 January 2016	NON-EXEMPT

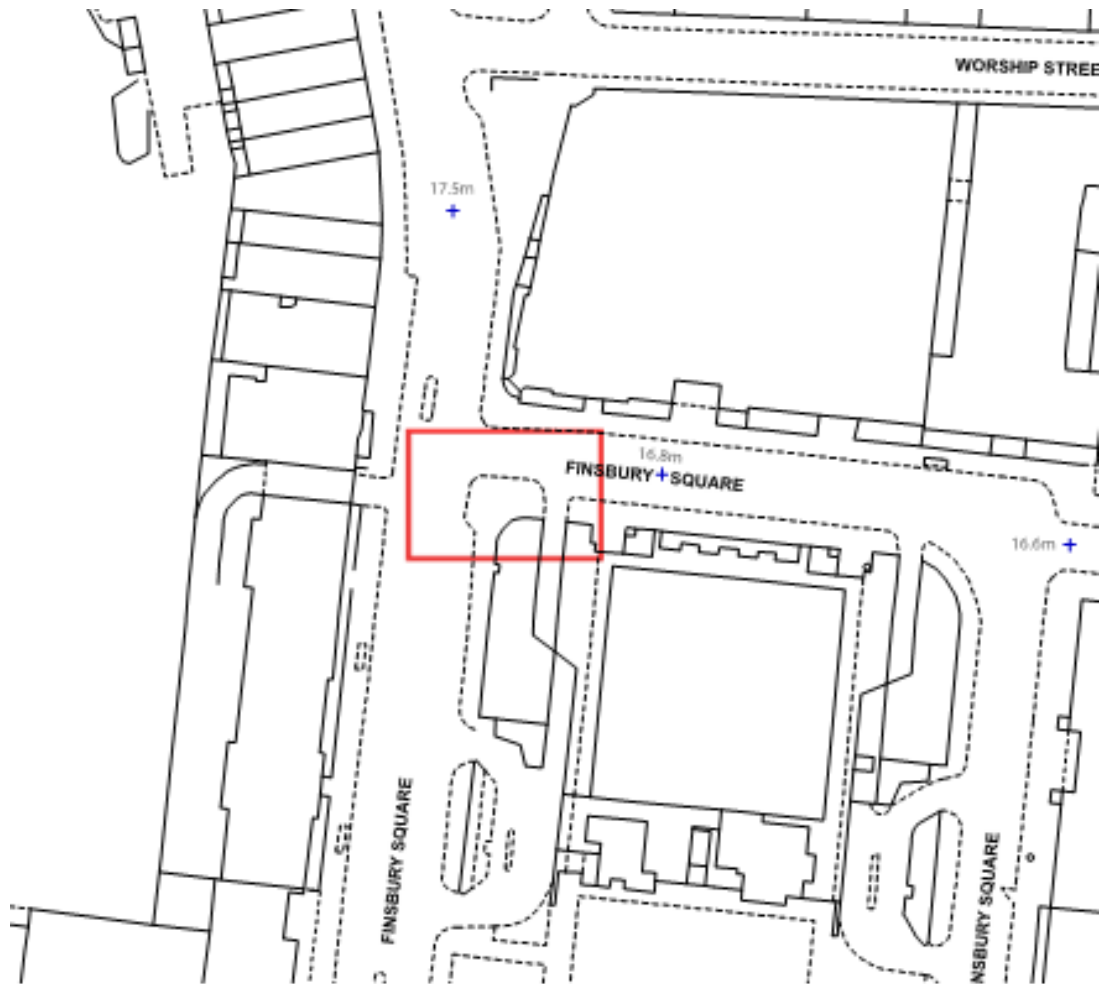
Application number	P2015/5141/ADV
Application type	Advertisement Consent (Council's own)
Ward	Bunhill
Listed building	Grade II Finsbury Square
Conservation area	Bunhill Fields and Finsbury Square
Development Plan Context	Bunhill and Clerkenwell Core Strategy Key Area Moorfields Archaeological Priority Area Central Activities Zone City Fringe Opportunity Area Local Cycle Route Major Cycle Route Finsbury Local Plan Policy BC8 – Employment Priority Area Bunhill & Clerkenwell Finsbyrt Local Plan Area Finsbury Square Open Space Within 100m of Strategic Road Network Finsbury Square protected by London Square Preservation Act 1931.
Licensing Implications	None
Site Address	Pavement on Finsbury Square near junction with City Road, London, EC2
Proposal	Installation of a freestanding internally illuminated advertisement display panel (6 sheet) on the pavement on the north side of Finsbury Square

Case Officer	Emily Benedek
Applicant	Islington Council
Agent	Jeremy Foster

1. RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is asked to resolve to **REFUSE** advertisement consent for the reason set out in Appendix 1.

2. SITE PLAN (site outlined in black)



3. PHOTOS OF SITE/STREET

Location of sign

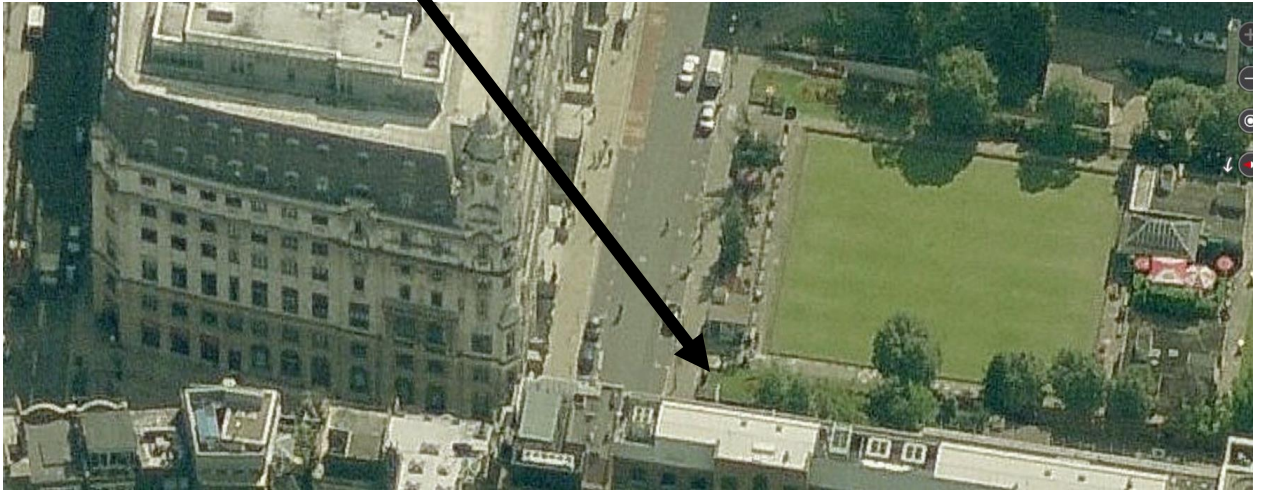


Image 1: Aerial Photo of the Front of the Site



Image 2: Street View of the Site

Location of sign

4. SUMMARY

- 4.1 Advertisement consent is sought for the installation of a free standing internally illuminated advertisement display panel (6 sheet) on the pavement outside Islington Central Library.

- 4.2 The application is brought to committee because it is a Council-own development.
- 4.3 The proposed advertisement display panel will cause harm to the setting of the adjacent historic buildings, would fail to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Bunhill Fields and Finsbury Square Conservation Area and would cause unnecessary street clutter.
- 4.4 It is recommended that advertisement consent be refused.

5. SITE AND SURROUNDING

- 5.1 The application site relates to the pavement on the north side of Finsbury Square. Finsbury Square is a Grade II Listed green surrounded by commercial buildings and several of these buildings are locally listed. The immediate area is characterised by a mix of commercial buildings varying between six and eight storeys in height.
- 5.2 The site is located in the Bunhill Fields and Finsbury Square Conservation Area.

6. PROPOSAL (IN DETAIL)

- 6.1 Advertisement consent is sought for the installation of a freestanding internally illuminated advertisement display panel (6 sheet) on the pavement on the north side of Finsbury Square close to the junction with City Road.
- 6.2 The proposed sign will measure a maximum of 2.695 metres in height, 1.37 metres in width and 0.24 metres in depth. The visible area of the digital screen display will measure 1.15 metres in width and 1.76 metres in height. The proposed display will be internally illuminated and the LED backlit display brightness will be fully adjustable to distinguish between day and night ambient levels.

7. RELEVANT HISTORY:

PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

- 7.1 None

ENFORCEMENT:

- 7.2 None

PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE:

- 7.3 None

8. CONSULTATION

Public Consultation

- 8.1 Letters were sent to 23 occupants of adjoining and nearby properties at Finsbury Square on the 15/12/15. A site notice was placed outside the site and the application was advertised in the Islington Gazette on 24/12/15. Therefore the public consultation expired on 14/01/16.
- 8.2 At the time of the writing of this report no responses had been received from the public with regard to the application.

Internal Consultees

- 8.3 **Design and Conservation Officer:** Objects to the proposal. It is in a prominent location with the Bunhill Fields/Finsbury Square Conservation Area. It is also on the setting of the local landmark and the locally listed Triton Court and to the entrance to Finsbury Square, on the most significant parts of the conservation area. This is a very sensitive location with several Grade 1, Grade II* and Grade II, locally listed and historic buildings nearby. Internally illuminated signs detract from the distinctive character and appearance of the conservation area and the significance of the historic buildings/environment.
- 8.4 **Highways:** No objection to the proposal.

External Consultees

- 8.5 **Transport for London:** No objection to the principle of development subject to the inclusion of conditions.
- 8.6 **Islington Society:** Objects to the proposal. It is noted that the Conservation Officer objects to all the advertisement application and the proposal would alter the character of the borough. The proposal would add clutter to the streets with more large, illuminated, gaudy advertisements. The proposed signs by nature of their size are not small and the proposals would inevitably be a driving safety hazard.

9. RELEVANT POLICIES

Details of all relevant policies and guidance notes are attached in Appendix 2. This report considers the proposal against the following development plan documents.

National Guidance

- 9.1 The National Planning Policy Framework 2012 and Planning Policy Guidance seek to secure positive growth in a way that effectively balances economic, environmental and social progress for this and future generations. The NPPF and PPG are material considerations and have been taken into account as part of the assessment of these proposals. Development Plan
- 9.2 The Development Plan is comprised of the London Plan 2015 (Consolidated with Alterations since 2011), Islington Core Strategy 2011, Development Management Policies 2013, The Finsbury Local Plan 2013 and Site Allocations 2013. The policies of the Development Plan that are considered relevant to this application are listed at Appendix 2 to this report.

Designations

- 9.3 The site has the following designations under the London Plan 2015, Islington Core Strategy 2011, Development Management Policies 2013, and Site Allocations 2013:
- Bunhill Fields and Finsbury Square Conservation Area
 - Bunhill and Clerkenwell Core Strategy Key Area
 - Moorfields Archaeological Priority Area
 - Central Activities Zone
 - City Fringe Opportunity Area

- Local Cycle Route
- Major Cycle Route
- Finsbury Local Plan Policy BC8 – Employment Priority Area
- Bunhill & Clerkenwell Finsbyrt Local Plan Area
- Finsbury Square Open Space
- Within 100m of Strategic Road Network

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) / Document (SPD)

9.4 The SPGs and/or SPDs which are considered relevant are listed in Appendix 2.

10. ASSESSMENT

10.1 The main issues arising from this proposal relate to:

- Amenity
- Highways Safety

Amenity

- 10.2 Islington's Planning Policies and Guidance encourage high quality design which complements the character of an area. In particular, policy DM2.1 of Islington's adopted Development Management Policies requires all forms of development to be high quality, incorporating inclusive design principles while making a positive contribution to the local character and distinctiveness of an area based upon an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics. Development Management Policy DM2.3 seeks to ensure all developments within conservation areas and their settings are of high quality contextual design to ensure they conserve or enhance the conservation area's significance. Furthermore, Development Management Policy DM2.6 requires all advertisements to be of a high standard and contribute to a safe and attractive environment. Any new sign should not cause a public safety hazard or contribute to a loss of amenity and should be appropriate to the building,
- 10.3 The application site is located within the setting of the Grade II listed green which has great stature and is highly significant within Finsbury Square. The proposed advert will also be located opposite the locally listed Triton Court and is therefore considered to be in a highly sensitive location by reason of the surrounding heritage assets.
- 10.4 The Conservation Area Design Guidelines (2002) for the Bunhill Fields and Finsbury Square Conservation states (paragraph 22.27) that "internally illuminated signs will not normally be permitted. Other signs should be of appropriate scale and design and conform to the Council's standards."
- 10.5 The proposed advertisement sign will be positioned on the on the north side of Finsbury Square and it is against the backdrop of this listed green that the sign will be at its most prominent. The proposed sign will measure 2.695 metres in height and will be internally illuminated. It is considered that when viewed against the back drop of the Square as well as the surrounding historic buildings, the proposed sign by reason of its size and siting will appear unduly dominant and out of character within the setting of the listed building. Furthermore, the proposed illumination will only exacerbate these points and create a strong contrast between the sign and the

heritage assets. It is also noted that the pavement along this section of Finsbury Square is uncluttered and is characterised by the natural landscape. The proposal would therefore add unnecessary street clutter to the detriment of the conservation area and would adversely affect the setting of several adjacent listed green spaces and buildings.

- 10.6 Given the above, the proposal is considered to be contrary to the aims of Council objectives on design and in accordance with policies 7.4 (Character) of the London Plan 2015, CS8 (Enhancing Islington's character) of the Core Strategy 2011 and Development Management Policies DM2.1, DM2.3 and DM2.6.

Highways Safety

- 10.7 It should be ensured that all new advertisement signs do not cause a hazard to pedestrians or road users, as a result of their visual dominance and method of illumination, in accordance with policy DM2.6 of the Islington Development Management Policies 2013.
- 10.8 The proposed sign will be internally illuminated, will not have flashing illumination and will have an LED backlit display brightness which can be adjusted to suit the day/night ambient levels. The sign will be located on the back edge of the pavement and has been positioned to ensure there are no public safety hazards and maintain the free flow of pedestrian traffic. The plans have been reviewed by both the Council's Highways team and Transport for London who, subject to attached conditions, raised no objections to the proposal in terms of its size, siting or method of illumination and did not consider the proposed sign would have a detrimental impact on highways safety. The proposal is therefore not considered to cause a hazard to pedestrians or road users in line with policy DM2.6 of the Islington Development Management Policies June 2013.

11.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Summary

- 11.1 The proposed advertisement display panel is considered to be unacceptable in amenity terms and would have a detrimental impact on the setting of the adjacent Grade II Listed Green. The proposed sign would add street clutter and would fail to conserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Bunhill Fields and Finsbury Square Conservation Area.
- 11.2 It is not considered that the proposal would have an adverse impact on pedestrian or highways safety by reason of its size, siting or method of illumination.

Conclusion

- 11.3 It is recommended that advertisement consent be refused for the reason set out in Appendix 1 – RECOMMENDATIONS.

APPENDIX 1 – RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION A

That advertisement consent is refused for the following reason:

1	Reason
	The proposed advertisement sign by reason of its size, siting and method of illumination would result in additional street clutter and would have a harmful impact on the setting in front of the Grade II Listed Finsbury Square and adjoining listed buildings. The proposal would fail to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Bunhill Fields and Finsbury Square Conservation Area and as such, would be harmful to local amenity contrary to policies CS8 and CS9 of the Adopted Islington Core Strategy (2011), policies DM2.3 and DM2.6 of the Adopted Islington Development Management Policies (2013) and the Conservation Area Design Guidelines (2002).

List of Informatives:

1	Positive statement
	<p>To assist applicants in a positive manner, the Local Planning Authority has produced policies and written guidance, all of which is available on the Council's website.</p> <p>A pre-application advice service is also offered and encouraged.</p> <p>The LPA and the applicant have worked positively and proactively in a collaborative manner through both the pre-application and the application stages to deliver an acceptable development in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF.</p> <p>The LPA delivered the decision in a timely manner in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF.</p>

APPENDIX 2: RELEVANT POLICIES

This appendix lists all relevant development plan policies and guidance notes pertinent to the determination of this planning application.

1 National Guidance

The National Planning Policy Framework 2012 seeks to secure positive growth in a way that effectively balances economic, environmental and social progress for this and future generations. The NPPF is a material consideration and has been taken into account as part of the assessment of these proposals.

2. Development Plan

The Development Plan is comprised of the London Plan 2015, Islington Core Strategy 2011, Development Management Policies 2013 and the Finsbury Local Plan 2013. The following policies of the Development Plan are considered relevant to this application:

A) The London Plan 2015 - Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London

3 London's people

7 London's living places and spaces
Policy 7.4 Local character
Policy 7.6 Architecture

B) Islington Core Strategy 2011

Spatial Strategy

Policy CS8 (Enhancing Islington's Character)

Strategic Policies

Policy CS9 (Protecting and Enhancing Islington's Built and Historic Environment)

C) Development Management Policies June 2013

Design and Heritage

DM2.1 Design

DM2.3 Heritage

DM2.6 Advertisements

3. Designations

The site has the following designations under the London Plan 2015, Islington Core Strategy 2011, Development Management Policies 2013, Finsbury Local Plan 2013 and Site Allocations 2013:

- Bunhill Fields and Finsbury Square

- Conservation Area
- Bunhill and Clerkenwell Core Strategy Key Area
- Moorfields Archaeological Priority Area
- Central Activities Zone
- City Fringe Opportunity Area
- Local Cycle Route
- Major Cycle Route
- Finsbury Local Plan Policy BC8 – Employment Priority Area
- Bunhill & Clerkenwell Finsbyrt Local Plan Area
- Finsbury Square Open Space
- Within 100m of Strategic Road Network

4. Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) / Document (SPD)

The following SPGs and/or SPDs are relevant:

Islington Local Development Plan

London Plan

Urban Design Guide (2006)

Conservation Area Design Guidelines (2002)