

Agenda Item A13	Committee Date 27 July 2009	Application Number 09/00516/ADV
Application Site Storey Institute Meeting House Lane Lancaster Lancashire		Proposal Erection of 2 fascia signs
Name of Applicant Lancaster City Council, Mr Trotman		Name of Agent
Decision Target Date 22 July 2009		Reason For Delay Committee Cycle
Case Officer	Mrs Jennifer Rehman	
Departure	No	
Summary of Recommendation	Recommendation of approval for Advertisement Consent, subject to referral to the Government Office North West.	

1.0 The Site and its Surroundings

- 1.1 For clarification purposes, this application and the corresponding listed building application would under normal circumstances be determined under delegated powers. However, the City Council own the building and are also the applicants. As such they should be considered by the Committee before being referred to the Government Office North West.
- 1.2 The Storey Institute is a Grade II listed building designed by Paley and Austin, constructed between 1887-1891. The Institute, which is of significant architectural and historic merit, occupies a prominent corner position at the junction of Meeting House Lane and Castle Hill and is an important and imposing building within the Castle Conservation Area. The building dominates the approach to the Castle Hill Precinct and contributes significantly to the City's townscape.

2.0 The Proposal

- 2.1 Advertisement Consent is sought for the erection of two internally illuminated fascia signs, each to be located on the outer walls of the entrance porch fronting Meeting House Lane. The signs comprise of a ring, with a diameter of 600mm, enclosing an 'i', measuring 450mm in height. They would be constructed and finished in a black powder coated metal with a depth of 100mm, located 2.2m above ground floor level. The overall projection from the stone wall measures 120mm. The signs will be illuminated with static pink backlit light emitting diodes (LEDs).
- 2.2 The signs are proposed to advertise the new Lancaster Tourist Information Centre, which has recently relocated into the Institute from its previous location on Castle Hill.

3.0 Site History

3.1 The site has a lengthy planning history particularly relating to works requiring listed building consent. The most relevant histories are as follows:

Application Number	Proposal	Decision
07/00384/DPA & 07/00385/LB	Change of use and listed building applications for the conversion to centre for creative industries, comprising of auditorium, bar and cafe, creative workspaces, Folly Gallery and Storey Gallery and associated admin offices	Permitted
06/00405/DPA & 06/00406/LB	Change of use and listed building applications for the conversion to centre for creative industries, comprising of auditorium, bar and cafe, creative workspaces, Folly Gallery and Storey Gallery and associated admin offices.	Permitted
98/00243/DPA & 98/00244/LB	Erection of non-illuminated individually lettered sign and two vertical banners	Permitted

4.0 Consultation Responses

4.1 None.

5.0 Neighbour Representations

5.1 None received.

6.0 Principal Development Plan Policies

6.1 The following **Lancaster District Local Plan** policies are relevant:

Policy **E41** requires proposals for advertisements in the Castle Conservation Area to be refused if they do not preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area, by virtue of their position, size, materials, colour, size and style of lettering, including the means of illumination.

Policy **E33** seeks to ensure that internal or external alterations to listed buildings would not have an adverse effect on the special architectural or historic character or interest of the buildings or their surroundings.

6.2 **Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 7** 'Shopfronts and Advertisements Design Guide' sets out the Councils design requirements for new advertisements in the City Centre and its conservation areas.

6.3 The following **Lancaster District Core Strategy** policies are relevant:

Policy **E1** (Environmental Capital) sets out a strategic policy objective to safeguard, protect and enhance listed buildings and conservation areas within the District.

7.0 Comment and Analysis

7.1 The key issues for Members to consider in determining this application are whether the proposal satisfies the criteria set out in Policy E41, E33 and SPG 7 and in particular whether the proposal is acceptable in terms of the impact on the listed building and the conversation area.

7.2 With regards to compliance with the above policy considerations, it should be noted that the proposed signage has been significantly improved from earlier pre-application proposals, which involved neon internal illumination. Neon lighting is considered inappropriate and insensitive to the historic fabric and conservation status of many parts of the City Centre. Very few shopfronts and advertisements use neon illumination.

7.3 As a general rule, advertisements within the Conservation Area and on Listed Buildings are to be discreet and sympathetic, usually involving individual lettering and external lighting. Internally illuminated box lettering is generally resisted.

- 7.4 Notwithstanding the above, these proposals have been the subject of pre-applications discussions and have been agreed by the Council's Senior Conservation Officer.
- 7.5 Whilst the form of the signage is not typical for the area, consideration has been given to the size of the advertisements proposed and their position on the building. It is concluded that the advertisements would not over-dominate the appearance of the listed building or adversely affect the wider character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The stonework will remain exposed between the ring and the 'i' with the fixings made into the mortar rather than the stone ashlar. Black powder coated lettering is proposed to match the existing black rainwater goods with subtle LED halo illumination, coloured pink.
- 7.6 Whilst the pink tone may be surprising to some Members, it is believed that this will be a subtle colour. However, in reaching a recommendation of approval, a condition is proposed to control the exact colour of the illumination.

8.0 Conclusions

- 8.1 Based on the above considerations and taking into account the considerable pre-application discussions, it is recommended that Advertisement Consent can be supported, subject to the following conditions:

Recommendation

That subject to referral of the application to the Government Office, Advertisement Consent **BE GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

1. Standard Advertisement Timescale – 5 years
2. Standard Advertisement condition - owners consent to display
3. Standard Advertisement condition - signs not to endanger highway, railway etc
4. Standard Advertisement condition - maintenance of advertisements
5. Standard Advertisement condition - advertisements should not endanger the public
6. Standard Advertisement condition - where signs to be removed, site is left in a good condition
7. Notwithstanding the submitted plans, the signage shall have a matt or satin finish.
8. Notwithstanding the submitted plans, the exact colour of lighting is to be agreed on site.

Human Rights Act

This recommendation has been reached after consideration of the provisions of The Human Rights Act. Unless otherwise stated in this report, the issues arising do not appear to be of such magnitude to override the responsibility of the City Council to regulate land use for the benefit of the community as a whole, in accordance with national law.

Background Papers

1. None