

SECTION '2' – Applications meriting special consideration

Application No : 13/00676/ADV

Ward:
Bromley Town

Address : The Glades Shopping Centre High
Street Bromley BR1 1DN

OS Grid Ref: E: 540364 N: 169136

Applicant : Mr Charles Forrester

Objections : YES

Description of Development:

5 Internally illuminated shopping centre entrance fascia signs (High street, Elmfield Road, Queens Gardens and Market Square) 1 non illuminated fascia sign above gates at Elmfield Road and 1 internally illuminated sign to car park entrance (Kentish Way).

Key designations:

Conservation Area: Bromley Town Centre
Areas of Archeological Significance
Biggin Hill Safeguarding Birds
Biggin Hill Safeguarding Area
Bromley Town Centre Area
Local Cycle Network
London City Airport Safeguarding
London City Airport Safeguarding Birds
London Distributor Roads
Primary Shopping Frontage
Proposal Sites
Urban Open Space

Proposal

As a part of the rebranding of Capital Shopping Centres it is proposed to rename "The Glades" to "Intu Bromley". The proposal is therefore for replacement signage to all access / egress points to the shopping centre as follows:

- High Street / Elmfield Road Sign- 1x fascia sign measuring 6.01m (w) x 0.64 (h) with applied 0.4m high black / orange lettering and part halo / part internal illumination to lettering (Existing signage etched into glazed first floor elevation of building fabric to be removed) ref. 8-E3
- Elmfield Road- 1 x fascia sign measuring 5.31m (w) x 0.58m (h) with 0.4m high black / orange lettering and part halo / part internal illumination to lettering (Existing signage etched into glazed first floor elevation of building fabric to be removed) ref.8-E65

- Elmfield Road (above gates to pedestrian car park access) 1 x fascia sign measuring 3m(w) x 1m (h) with applied 0.4m high black / orange lettering non illuminated ref. 8-E121
- Queens Gardens (south) - fascia sign measuring 8.18m (w) x 0.58m (h) with applied 0.4m high black / orange lettering and part halo / part internal illumination to lettering (Existing signage etched into glazed first floor elevation of building fabric to be removed) ref.8-E72
- Queens Gardens (north) – fascia sign measuring 4.88m (w) x 0.58m (h) with applied 0.4m high black / orange lettering and part halo / part internal illumination to lettering (Existing signage etched into glazed first floor elevation of building fabric to be removed) ref.8-E98
- High Street (White Hart Slip)- fascia sign measuring 7.78m (w) x 0.58m (h) with applied 0.4m high black / orange lettering and part halo / part internal illumination to lettering (Existing signage etched into glazed first floor elevation of building fabric to be removed) ref.8-E81
- Kentish Way /Stockwell Close Car Park - fascia sign measuring 7.04m (w) x 0.90m (h) with applied 0.4m high black / orange lettering and part halo / part internal illumination to lettering, ref.8-E110

The applicants agent has also submitted details (for information purposes only) of signage that will have been removed from the following locations:

- White Hart Slip / Market Square walk way canopy
- Widmore Road Canopy
- Glades Place Car Park

Location

The application site covers the Glades Shopping Centre which bounds Widmore Road in the north, Queens Gardens and Kentish Way to the east, Elmfield Road to the south and the High Street to the west.

Whilst the shopping centre itself is not within the Bromley Town Centre Conservation Area the streets leading up to the centre are. This includes Queens Gardens and the area from Market Square along the high street down to its junction with Elmfield Road. The conservation area itself is made up of several components, each with its own character, they comprise:

- The retail core radiating along the main streets spreading from Market Square
- Several civic and institutional nodes, generally at the periphery of the retail heart;
- Several pockets of residential development from various eras of the towns growth; and
- The landscape and parkland setting reflecting Bromley's historic siting and present context.

The predominant component of the Conservation area is the traditional retail heart of Bromley centred on Market Square, following the high street north and south

with some radial off-shoots along Widmore Road and East Street. The retail heart of the town centre was largely formed during the twentieth century at a time of prosperous growth. This resulted in the loss of some original buildings however along the high street there are still a significant portion of buildings which retain a character and appearance that enhances and contributes to the interest and vitality essential to engender the 'spirit' so important to a town centre.

The conservation area was designated in 1987 around the historic Market Square and high street Bromley in order to retain and enhance the town's late Nineteenth Century character. This character stems from the way Bromley developed around the focal point of the Market Square.

There are 7 signs that will be replaced, five out of seven will occupy a lower position at ground floor fascia level, a further 3 will be removed altogether,

This store is very prominently site at the confluence of Market Square and the north-western entrance to the Glades (indoor) Shopping Centre.

Comments from Local Residents

Nearby owners/occupiers were notified of the application and 1 local representation was received which can be summarised as follows:

- Garish, brash, and above all cheap-looking plastic signage which is inappropriate for what is supposed to be Bromley's premier shopping centre. There is no connectivity here to anything which would represent a Bromley town brand, just the replacement of a well known name for a rather crass corporate one. Also if this is going to become the acceptable standard for Bromley High Street you may as well forget your earlier pledge to improve shop signage in this town.

Comments from Consultees

From a highways point of view no objections are raised.

From an environmental health point of view no objections are raised.

Advisory Panel for Conservation Areas (APCA) – The proposed new signage does not reflect the original design of The Glades which was intended to signify a woodland theme. The existing name reflects that theme and the design of the building. The new proposal is at odds with that design, strong objections are therefore raised to the proposal.

Town Centre Development - Residents and users of Bromley Town Centre have always associated the identity of the town centre with the Glades. Therefore, it would have been expected that any significant rebranding of Bromley's primary shopping destination would have been subject to consultation with stakeholders as well as the wider community. This is not the case. Although we are aware that the Intu rebranding has precedent in other boroughs, it is the opinion of the Town Centre Development team that the lack of consultation and the significant

departure from the design and theme of the original branding of the Glades will have a negative effect on the local identity of the Bromley's primary shopping centre and we are therefore inclined not to support this application.

Town Centre Management - No comment

Heritage & Urban Design

From a Conservation Area point of view the proposal would not cause harm to the conservation area and so no objections are raised. It is unfortunate that they have chosen this unusual name as The Glades had an interior design theme based upon trees and leaves which can be seen throughout the mall in the form of decorative metal work leaves and etchings in the glass.

From an Urban Design point of view the new 'INTU Bromley' name and signage for the Glades has a lower impact on the public realm than the current scheme, so would not increase the visual clutter in the town centre or impede its visual legibility.

However, the scheme could impact on people's comprehension of the town when the name for the Glades is removed from signs and facades as people will be slow in the realisation that INTU Bromley and the Glades are the same thing.

The new band is out of keeping with the overall theme for the Glades and thus sits uncomfortably as a visual composition. i.e. the detailing of the Glades balustrades, lighting and panels etc. are Art Nouveau in style and the INTU Bromley sign is contemporary with modern colours form and font.

More pressingly, at a time of austerity when the challenges from internet competition are pressing high streets across the country; is this the best time to remove elements from the Borough which hold a positive relationship with its patrons?

All interventions which impact, [negatively or otherwise], upon the public perception must be scrutinized carefully. The town centre was impacted on in the past by the Bluewater shopping centre and the proposal for Westfield in Croydon will undoubtedly have an effect on the Bromley's fortunes. Therefore, the Council should take a considered view on all interventions being developed or removed from the town.

Nationally the brand change for the INTU group makes sense but locally the benefits are reduced as people will generally review things from a personal and parochial perspective. The Glades is inextricably linked to the town centres identity and any name change is likely to have a detrimental impact on the town centre, as people generally do not like change and will view this intervention wearily.

A possible solution for Bromley could be to change the brand from 'INTU Bromley' to, 'INTU the Glades', as the shopping centre itself is probably the primary destination for the majority of visitors in the town centre.

Planning Considerations

The application falls to be determined in accordance with the following policies of the Unitary Development Plan and the London Plan:

BE11 Conservation Areas

BE21 Control of Advertisements, Hoardings and Signs

Supplementary Planning Guidance - Bromley Town Centre Conservation Area

Policy BE21 requires adverts to have regard to the character of the surrounding area and be in keeping with the scale form and character of any buildings on which they are placed. Illuminated fascia sign, projecting signs and means of external illumination will not normally be permitted within conservation areas.

Policy BE11 states in order to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of conservation areas a proposal for new development will be expected to respect or complement the scale form and materials of existing buildings and respect and incorporate in the design existing landscape or other features that contribute to the character appearance or historic value of the area.

The Supplementary Planning Guidance for the conservation area regarding The Glades states the following (p28):

“The Glades shopping centre, a large commercial development, has been well integrated into the town centre complementing rather than competing with the traditional grain and pattern of the High Street... The Glades Shopping Centre is a substantial structure stretching south from Widmore Road to Elmfield Road. The building has been designed and detailed to complement the town centre with differing but harmonious treatments to the various parts. The building has been excluded from the conservation area but still has an impact on its character as its eastern elevation dominates the Queens Gardens.”

It should also be noted that whilst five out of the seven signs proposed will occupy a lower position at ground floor fascia level, the existing signage at first floor level are effectively etched into the building fabric in an unobtrusive fashion. Therefore in spite of the first floor siting of some of the existing signs it is considered that they are in fact less conspicuous than the bold contemporary illuminated signage that is currently proposed.

The INTU rebranding has been rolled out across 14 other UK wide destinations, it is notable that of these 3 shopping centres in Manchester, Cardiff and Bristol appear to have retained their original names.

Conclusions

The designation of a conservation area does not preclude the display of well sited, well designed advertisements that have a neutral/enhancing impact upon the character and appearance of a conservation area.

The application proposes corporate rebranding to "INTU" and has little regard to the appearance and design of The Glades. The signage therefore appears as a somewhat awkward add on.

Members may consider that from an Urban Design point of view signage that provides a link between "INTU" and The Glades may be more satisfactory. However, from a conservation point of view there are no objections raised and therefore refusal of the application may not be sustainable on the basis that the signage would not be so harmful to the visual amenities of character and appearance of the Conservation Area to warrant refusal of consent on this basis.

Background papers referred to during production of this report comprise all correspondence on file ref. 13/00676, excluding exempt information.

RECOMMENDATION: ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT GRANTED

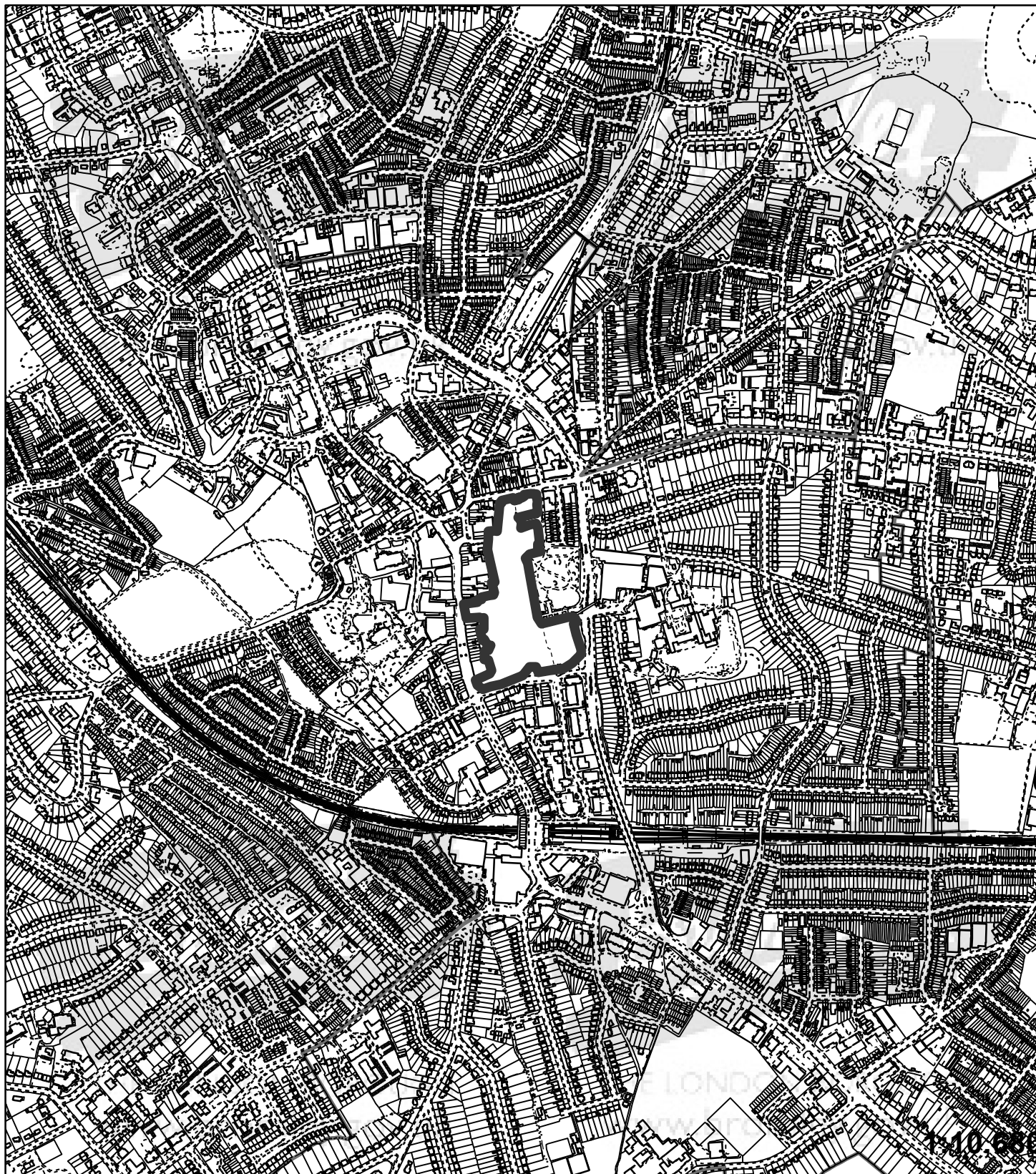
subject to the following conditions:

- | | | | |
|----|--------|---|-----------------------------|
| 6 | ACF01 | Standard 5 year period | |
| | ACF01R | Reason F01 | |
| 7 | ACF02 | Rest. of luminance-(s) (2 in) | High Street/Elmfield Road |
| | | sign (ref. 8-E3) 250 | |
| | ACF02R | Reason F02 | |
| 8 | ACF02 | Rest. of luminance-(s) (2 in) | Elmfield Road sign (ref. 8- |
| | | E65) 250 | |
| | ACF02R | Reason F02 | |
| 9 | ACF02 | Rest. of luminance-(s) (2 in) | Queens Gardens sign |
| | | (south) (ref. 8-E72) 250 | |
| | ACF02R | Reason F02 | |
| 10 | ACF02 | Rest. of luminance-(s) (2 in) | Queens Gardens sign |
| | | (north) (ref. 8-E98) 250 | |
| | ACF02R | Reason F02 | |
| 11 | ACF02 | Rest. of luminance-(s) (2 in) | High Street (White Hart |
| | | Slip) sign (ref. 8-E81) 250 | |
| | ACF02R | Reason F02 | |
| 12 | ACF02 | Rest. of luminance-(s) (2 in) | Kentish Way/Stockwell |
| | | Close Car Park Sign (ref. 8-E110) 250 | |
| | ACF02R | Reason F02 | |
| 13 | ACF07 | Advert hoarding(s) - comply. with plans | |
| | ACF07R | Reason F07 | |

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"This plan is provided to identify the location of the site and should not be used to identify the extent of the application site"

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