

Our Ref: 20357/CJ/ao'm  
Your Ref: PP-09747259  
Email: [cjones@firstplan.co.uk](mailto:cjones@firstplan.co.uk)  
Date: 12 April 2021

Ms Kirsty Minney,  
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council,  
Planning Services,  
Town Hall,  
Tunbridge Wells,  
Kent,  
TN1 1RS.

Dear Kirsty,

## **CONSENT TO DISPLAY ADVERTISEMENTS**

### **HANOVER HOUSE, 18 MOUNT EPHRAIM ROAD, ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS, KENT, TN1 1ED.**

We are instructed by our client, N Family Holdings Ltd (trading as N Family Club), to submit the enclosed application for consent to display one free standing externally illuminated metal panel sign in conjunction with their occupation of Hanover House, 18 Mount Ephraim Road.

Recent permissions at the site (refs: 21/00165/FULL and 20/03845/LBC) granted by the Council have facilitated refurbishment works at the site. These works will be commencing shortly. The proposed signage will replace that which was existing from the previous occupier of the site and will allow N Family Club to appropriately market their presence when the nursery opens later in the year as a new business in the town.

This application has been submitted via the Planning Portal (Ref: PP-09747259) and the requisite fee of £132.00 has been paid online.

In accordance with national and local validation requirements, the following documents are attached in support of this application:

- Completed Application Form;
- Site Location Plan;
- Existing and Proposed Signage; and
- Planning and Heritage Statement (contained within this letter)

### **Site Description**

The application site is a broadly rectangular corner plot that is located at the junction of Mount Ephraim Road, Hanover Road and Rock villa Road. Hanover House, the Grade II Listed Building that occupies the plot is centrally located and the south west corner of the plot fronts onto Mount Ephraim Road and Hanover Road.

The site is situated within a predominantly commercial location. Surrounding uses are largely officer with some residential dwellings. Immediately north/east adjacent to the car park is the flank elevation of



Montague House, which is operated by Kent County Council as a Family and Social Care office. Immediately south/east are various office buildings on Mount Ephraim Road. To the south/west are residential dwellings on Mount Ephraim Road. To the west on Rock Villa Road is an office building and its car park, which is situated at a higher level than the application site. Immediately north on Rock Villa Road is the Halo Gym.

In terms of advertisements, signage is in place at the site related to the previous occupiers of the site. This included 2no. freestanding signs, 1 at the junction of Mount Ephraim and Rock Villa Road and the other at the junction of Mount Ephraim Road and Hanover Road. Images of these are below.



The site is located within the Tunbridge Wells Conservation Area and the defined Tunbridge Wells Town Centre.

## **Planning History**

The application site has a very limited planning history. The following relevant applications have been found in regard to the site.

- Register Ref: 00/01040/LBC Listed Building Consent for internal repairs and alterations. Approved - 05/09/2000;
- Register Ref: 94/00317/LBC Listed Building Consent new electronic automatic barrier to existing car park. Approved 27/06/1994;
- Register Ref: 87/01371/LBC Listed Building Consent installation of timber platform in second floor room to carry a record protection filing cabinet. Approved 28/10/1987; and
- RegisterRef:75/02037/AHIST Advertisement for an Illuminated projecting sign. Approved 24/11/1975.

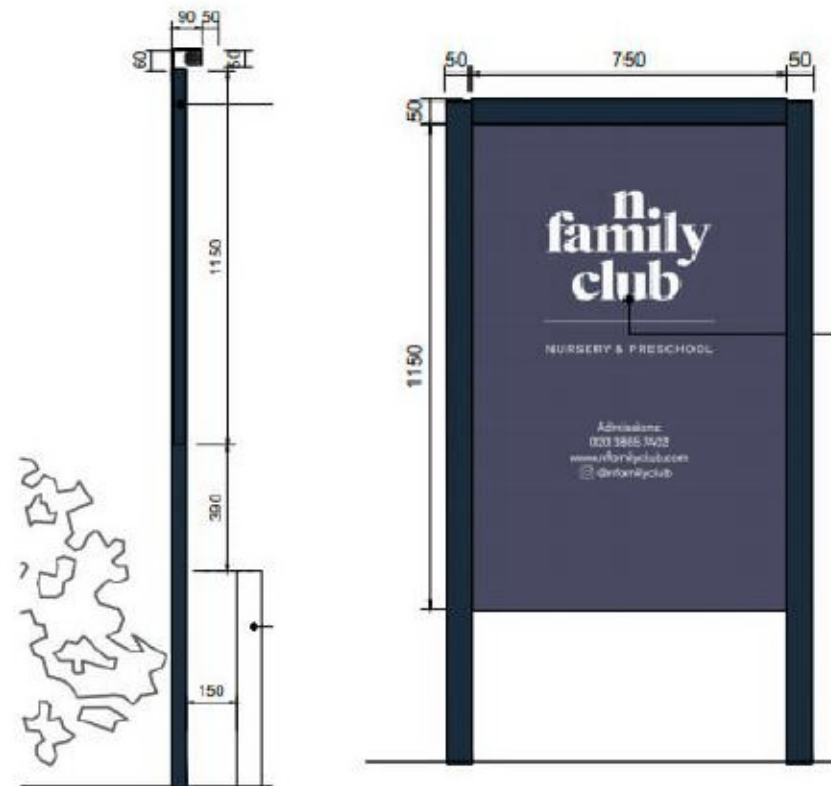
## **Application Proposals**

This application relates to the installation of one freestanding externally illuminated metal panel sign to the site frontage as a replacement for the similarity positioned existing freestanding sign advertising the previous occupiers of the site.

Extracts of the proposals are included below.



- 1no. free standing metal panel sign:
  - 2.2m tall, 75cm wide and 9cm deep;
  - Blue painted panel;
  - White vinyl lettering on blue background; and
  - Externally illuminated via slim profile trough light.



It is not considered that Listed Building Consent is required in this instance.

## Planning Policy Summary

The statutory development plan consists of the Core Strategy Development Plan (June 2020), Site Allocations Plan (2016) and Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan (Saved Policies) (2006). The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019), and National Planning Guidance (Online, 2018) are also material considerations.

### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019)

Chapter 16 of the NPPF sets out guidance on the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. Paragraphs **192** and **196** set out that the desirability of enhancing the significance of heritage assets is to be taken account of as well the public benefits of a proposal. **Paragraph 200** outlines that development proposals that preserve the elements of the setting of a conservation area that make a positive contribution should be treated favourably.

In terms of advertisements, **Paragraph 132** sets out that advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts.

### Core Strategy Development Plan (2010)

**Core Policy 4 Environment** sets out that the locally distinctive sense of place and character will be conserved and enhanced. It states that the Borough's heritage assets, including Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Schedules Ancient Monuments, archaeological sites and Historic Parks and Gardens will be conserved and enhances and special regard will be had to their setting.

**Core Policy 9 Development in Royal Tunbridge Wells** seeks to provide and maintain a Regional Hub of strategic importance by development or redevelopment for a mix of uses, including housing, employment, health, retail, leisure and culture. Development must conserve and enhance the landscape and heritage and biodiversity assets of Royal Tunbridge Wells.

### Tunbridge Wells Local Plan (Saved Policies)

**Policy EN1** sets out that development needs to be satisfactory in regard to the nature and intensity of the proposals in terms of compatibility with neighbouring uses and would not cause significant harm to the amenities or character of the area. Additionally, proposals are not to cause harm to the residential amenities of adjoining occupiers.



**Policy EN5** outlines that proposals for development within a conservation area will be permitted if the proposals would preserve or enhance the buildings, related spaces, vegetation and activities which form the character and appearance of the area. The scale, massing, use of materials, and detailing would preserve or enhance the character of that part of the conservation area and the proposal would not result in the loss of trees, shrubs, hedges or other features important to the character of that part of the conservation area.

## Royal Tunbridge Wells and Rusthall Conservation Area Appraisal (2000)

Royal Tunbridge Wells and Rusthall Conservation Area was originally designated in 1969 with a number of additions up until 1992. The purpose of the appraisal document is to define the key elements that contribute to the special character and significance of the conservation area so as to inform development in the area and to ensure that proposals will not have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the area.

## Planning and Heritage Assessment

The application site is a Grade II listed building and lies within the Tunbridge Wells Conservation Area. As such, these are the designated heritage assets that are of relevance to this application.

As identified within the Planning Policy Summary above, it is required that development proposals affecting heritage assets preserve or enhance those aspects that make a positive contribution to the significance of the heritage asset. This is directly connected with Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which establishes a statutory duty for Local Planning Authorities. As such, the impact on the setting of both the Listed Building and Conservation Area has been carefully considered.

The proposal is for the installation of an externally illuminated freestanding metal panel sign that is navy/blue in colour. This comprises the replacement of a similarly located and proportioned sign. Its replacement will have an overall negligible impact on the appearance of the setting of the listed building, which will be preserved.

The proposed materials are high quality and will not be at odds with the overall appearance of the listed building. The use of the muted navy/blue (RAL 5011) is considered to be in keeping with the surrounds of the application site and wholly appropriate for the Listed Building and Conservation Area. Indeed, this is consistent with the previous freestanding panel sign.

A slim profile trough light will provide subtle illumination for the sign. This LED light will only be switched on during operational hours of the nursery and will be of low illuminance levels. Furthermore, as the light is mounted above the signage pointing downward, there will be restricted light spill ensuring the amenity of any surrounding neighbours will not be affected.

The limited scale and simple content of the sign is further considered to be appropriate to the building will not be at odds with or detract from its important or decorative features. The colour and material will match the proposed freestanding panel sign with blue and white. As a result, it will not be unduly prominent within the street scene.

In accordance with the NPPF, the proposed signage will preserve the aspects of the Listed building and Conservation Area that make a positive contribution to its significance. This scheme provides an appropriate signage solution that effectively markets the presence of the nursery, whilst preserving the character of the Listed Building and Conservation Area. The proposals are therefore in accordance with Core Policies 4 and 9 and Saved Policy EN5.



## Amenity and Public Safety Considerations

In terms of public safety and amenity the proposals are not considered to result in any harmful on the amenity of surrounding occupiers due to the slimline nature of the signage and subtle level of illumination.

The sign will not project over the highway and is behind the boundary wall, and thus will not impede any pedestrian or vehicle movements. In addition, the subtle illumination of the panel sign and limit of the illumination to the operational hours of the nursery. These measures further ensure that there would be no harm to surrounding residential properties.

The signage is considered to be compatible with the surrounding area resulting in no harm to public or private amenity, in accordance with Paragraph 132 of the NPPF and Saved Policy E1 of the Tunbridge Wells Local Plan (2006). The proposal should be considered acceptable in this regard.

## Conclusions

This application seeks advertisement consent for the installation of 1no sign at Hanover House, 18 Mount Ephraim Road. The signage is proposed by N Family Club who will operate their nursery from the premises. These proposals are related to a larger package of works that are soon to be underway, approved by the Council through application references 21/00165/FULL and 20/03845/LBC.

The proposed signage is consistent with paragraphs 192 and 200 of the NPPF and local Core Policies 4 and 9 as well as Policy EN5 as they fulfil the requirements of preserving or enhancing the character of the Grade II listed building.

In addition, the proposals comply with Paragraph 132 of the NPPF and Saved Policy EN1 of the Tunbridge Wells Borough Local Plan.

I therefore trust that the attached information is sufficient to facilitate the granting of permission for the proposed signage. However, should you have any further queries concerning the application please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



CHRIS JONES  
Director

Enc.