

CONSERVATION TEAM CONSULTATION APPLICATION RESPONSE

APPLICATION REF:	25/02278/AD
CASE OFFICER:	HT
APPLICATION SITE:	Church House, 32a Kneesworth Street, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 5AB
DESCRIPTION OF WORKS:	Erection of two signs on the front walls of the property (development already carried out).

RECOMMENDATION:

Although I previously raised concerns over size, location, materiality, and colour, I have reconsidered my position on this. Reducing the length of each sign by 1020mm is a significant consideration and on balance, I consider that the amended scheme is acceptable and withdraw my objection. This is on the basis that the amended signs satisfy the provisions of Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the aims of Section 16 of the NPPF and Policy HE1 of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031.

SHORT SUMMARY:

Impact on listed building's special character and the character and appearance of Royston Conservation Area

The proposal will have some impact upon the setting of listed buildings and the appearance of the RCA but harm is mitigated through the reduction in size.

DETAILED ANALYSIS AND CONSIDERATIONS:

I previously commented on 11 November 2025 advising that ref: 25/02250/LBC should be withdrawn and I note that it has. Regarding ref: 25/02278/AD I previously stated:

The first nursery advert appears on Google Maps in April 2023. The supporting statement states the following:

The Proposed Development

These applications are for the retention of two small low-level signs advertising the nursery which are affixed to the walls each side of the entrance. The first (Sign 1) is on the chamfered southern wall to replace a previous sign (seen in the above photo). The second sign (Sign 2) is positioned on the northern wall facing the street.



Sign 1

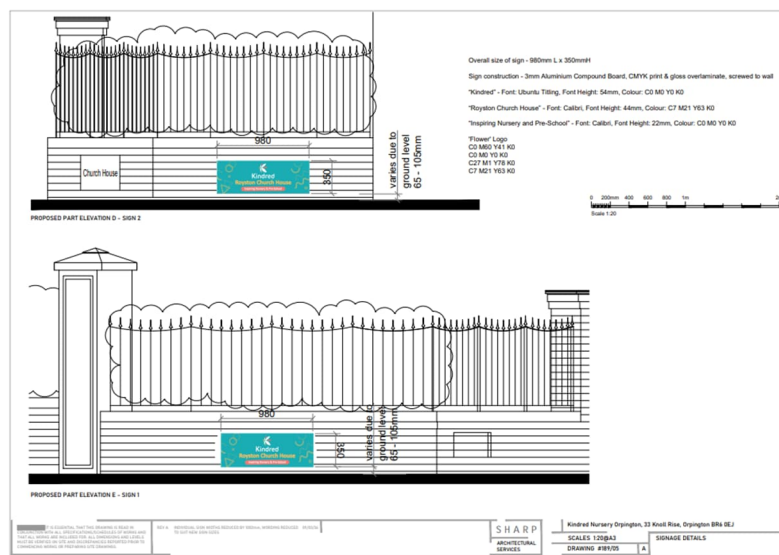


Sign 2

Firstly, I would not necessarily regard these signs as 'small'. Next, colours are subjective and in this particular case, the solid light blue background colour coupled with the duplication of relatively large signs does result in a rather strident arrangement at the access to this site which is flanked by grade II listed buildings. If two signs are proposed I would be seeking signs of at least half their current length. Better still, I advise that they are removed and replaced by a single twin-post-mounted sign placed in front of the hedge screen but behind the railing, thereby expressing the brickwork. This may be similar to the aforementioned Francis Frith Collection image which appears to show a notice board when the church was used in the 1920's.

I previously raised an OBJECTION to ref: 25/02278/AD on the basis of the **size, location** (unconventional plinth wall positions), **materiality** (over-laminate aluminium board) and **predominantly light blue colour**.

The existing signs measure 2000 x 350 whereas the amended proposal received on 9 March 2026 indicates shorter signes measuring 980 x 350 but still in the same location, with the same materiality and colour. With the proposal now being for new signage I assume the reference in the description to 'Development already carried out' will be omitted.



Considering that the existing signage is unauthorised and that the amended signage replaces this I assume that i) the standard advertisement condition (code C076 in Uniform) will be used and ii) a condition with the wording below (or similar) will be imposed:

The existing unauthorised signage shall be removed within 3 months of the date of this decision notice.

Reason: To ensure that special regard is paid to preserving the appearance of the Royston Conservation Area under Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Policy HE1 of the Local Plan and to address previously unauthorised works.

HERITAGE POLICY ASSESSMENT:

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990:
Sections 66(1) & 72(1)

North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031:
Policy HE1

NPPF (December 2024):

The following paragraphs are relevant:

- **135 c)** (*sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment*),
- **207** (*local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting*)
- **210** (*desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness*),
- **212** (*great weight should be given to the asset's conservation*),
- **213** (*clear and convincing justification*), and
- **215** (*harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use*).

CONCLUSION:

The proposal is considered **UNOBJECTIONABLE**.

OFFICER: Mark Simmons

DATE: 22/04/2026