

DELEGATED PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Abbey

App Ref: 230373/ADV

Address: R11 The Riverside, The Oracle, Bridge Street, Reading, RG1 2AG

Proposals: 2 sets of internally illuminated fascia text - to replace existing internally illuminated roundel - to replace existing, internally illuminated projection sign - to replace existing

Case Officer: Ryan Allen

Date received (valid from): 22 March 2023 **Target Decision date:** 17 May 2023

Site Description and Surrounding Area:

The application site is a commercial unit located on The Riverside, The Oracle. The unit fronts The Riverside, which is a wholly commercial area, with vibrant, varied shopfronts and signage, and also is identified as a Primary Shopping Area and Designated Primary Frontage within Central Reading. The building itself is not listed, nor does it fall within a conservation area.

Proposal

Advertisement consent is sought for the replacement of existing signage to the stores front elevation, including: 2no. internally illuminated fascia text, 1no. internally illuminated roundel and 1no. internally illuminated projecting signage. All illuminated aspects of the proposal are to be lit at a maximum of 500cd/m².

Plans/Documents Submitted:

Received 22/03/23

Drawing No: rev. G - Revisions (Photographs) - 24/02/23

Drawing No: PXRONL:040713 - Location Plan

Drawing No: 596721 -1 - Existing - dated 17/03/23

Drawing No: 596721 -2 - Proposed - dated 17/03/23

Drawing No: 596721 -3 - Proposed - dated 17/03/23

Drawing No: 596721 -4 - Site Plan & Block Plan - dated 17/03/23

Received 09/05/23

Drawing No: rev. I - Revisions (Photographs) - 05/05/23

Drawing No: 596721 -2 rev. A - Proposed - dated 09/05/23

Drawing No: 596721 -4 rev. A - Site Plan & Block Plan - dated 09/05/23

Relevant Planning History:

30/06/06 - 061095/ADV - 1 No. fascia sign, with 1 No. projecting logo sign, and 1 No. high level logo sign - Permitted

24/04/09 - 091352/FUL - Proposed shopfront and awnings - Refused

3/07/13 - 130985 - New signage. - Permitted

Consultation Responses:

Internal Consultation

None.

External Consultation

External consultation is not required for advertisement consent applications.

Equality Act 2010:

In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. However, there is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application. Therefore in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

Relevant Planning Policy and Guidance and Legal Context

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for Reading relevant to the application site comprises the *Reading Local Plan (2019)*

The '*National Planning Policy framework*' ('NPPF') 2018 states clearly that its content is to be a material consideration in the determination of applications. The 'NPPF' states that due weight should be given to the adopted policies of the Local Development Framework (LDF) according to their degree of consistency with the 'NPPF' (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the 'NPPF', the greater the weight that may be given). Accordingly, the 'NPPF' and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant

Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 requires the Local Planning Authority to exercise its powers under these regulations in the interests of amenity and public safety taking into account the provisions of the development plan, so far as they are material; and any other relevant factors. Regulation 3 states that factors relevant to amenity include the general characteristics of the locality, including the presence of any feature of historic, architectural, cultural, or similar interest.

Factors relevant to public safety include highway safety and whether the advert would hinder security or surveillance devices, including speed cameras.

Relevant Policies

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019):

CC7: Design and the Public Realm

CR7: Primary Frontages in Central Reading

EN3: Enhancement of Conservation Areas

OU4: Advertisements

OU5: Shopfronts and Cash Machines

SPG/SPDs

Reading Borough Council Shopfront Design Guide SPD

Appraisal

The main issues are considered to be:

- i) Amenity
- ii) Public safety

i) Amenity

Initial plans submitted illustrated a slight change from the existing fascia with internally illuminated text being proposed to the east of the property's fascia. Revised plans submitted by the agent show a change in the proposal with internally illuminated lettering moving from the east of the fascia, to the middle; similar to existing signage at the unit. The proposed signage is not considered to detract from the visual amenity of the local area and is in keeping with the character of the busy area in terms of design and materials used. The proposal does not differ greatly from the existing signage at the unit, and would continue the sympathetic and vibrant character for the unit. The unit's frontage is identified as a Designated Primary Frontage within Central Reading and the proposal is considered to maintain a high quality of design and active frontage.

Illumination levels are to be lit at 500cd/m², below the maximum allowance of 600cd/m² as referenced in policy OU4 of the Reading Borough Council Local Plan (2019). Also, condition AD2 is recommended to limit the luminance levels.

Overall, signage is considered acceptable in terms of policies CC7, CR7, EN3 and OU4 of the Reading Borough Council Local Plan (2019).

ii) Public Safety

The NPPG (in particular in this instance Paragraph: 068 Reference ID: 18b-068-20140306 & Paragraph: 078 Reference ID: 18b-078-20140306) provides guidance as to the considerations affecting public safety. These are detailed below (in *italics*), together with officer responses in relation to the proposal (in **bold**):

The main types of advertisement which may cause danger to road users are:

(a) those which obstruct or impair sight-lines at corners, bends or at a junction, or at any point of access to a highway; No

(b) those which, because of their size or siting, would obstruct or confuse a road-user's view, or reduce the clarity or effectiveness of a traffic sign or signal, or would be likely to distract road-users because of their unusual nature; No

(c) those which effectively leave insufficient clearance above any part of a highway, or insufficient lateral clearance for vehicles on the carriageway (due allowance being made for the camber of the road-surface); No

(d) those externally or internally illuminated signs (incorporating either flashing or static lights) including those utilising light emitting diode technology: No

i. where the means of illumination is directly visible from any part of the road; No

ii. which, because of their colour, could be mistaken for, or confused with, traffic lights or any other authorised signals; No

iii. which, because of their size or brightness, could result in glare and dazzle, or distract road-users, particularly in misty or wet weather; No

iv. which are subject to frequent changes of the display; No

(e) those which incorporate moving or apparently moving elements in their display, or successive individual advertisements which do not display the whole message; No

(f) those requiring close study (such as Public Information Panels), which are situated so that people looking at them would be insufficiently protected from passing vehicles; or those advertisements sited on narrow footpaths where they may interfere with safe passage by causing pedestrians to step into the road; No

(g) those which resemble traffic signs, as defined in section 64 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, and may therefore be subject to removal by the traffic authority under section 69 of that Act, for example:

i. those embodying red circles, crosses or triangles, or any traffic sign symbol; or those in combinations of colours which might otherwise be mistaken for traffic signs; No or

ii. those incorporating large arrows or chevrons with only the arrow or chevron made of retroflective material or illuminated, causing confusion with similar signs in use at, or approaching roundabouts. No

(h) those which embody directional or other traffic elements and which need special scrutiny because of possible resemblance to, or confusion with, traffic signs, for example, advertisements which:

i. contain a large arrow or chevron (or have a pointed end and have only a few words of message); No

ii. invite drivers to turn right on a main road, or where there is fast moving traffic; No

iii. invite drivers to turn, but are sited so close to the turning that there is not enough time to signal and turn safely; No or

iv. are so close to similar advertisements, or official traffic signs, that road-users might be confused in the vicinity of a road junction or other traffic hazard. No

The prevention of crime is a public safety consideration and local planning authorities should consider whether granting express consent could block the view of CCTV cameras, or whether illumination from an advertisement would cause glare on such cameras. No.

In light of the above it is confirmed that the proposals are considered to be satisfactory on public safety grounds.

Conclusion

GRANT

Subject to the following conditions:

Conditions

A1

AD1

AD2

Informatives

1. Your attention is drawn to the terms and conditions of this consent. Any development which is carried out but which differs materially from the approved plans and details, or does not comply with any condition(s) or planning obligation(s) attached to the consent may result in the Council taking action to remedy the breach of planning control. If you are in any doubt please contact the Council.
2. The local planning authority has worked positively and proactively with the applicant to resolve relevant matters to allow consent to be granted within the prescribed target or agreed extended timescale for the decision to be issued.