

DELEGATED PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Abbey

App Ref: 230628/LBC & 230677/ADV

Address: 23-24 Market Place, Reading, RG1 2DE

Proposals: Listed building consent for fascia sign and two projection signs / Advertisement consent for a fascia sign and two projection signs.

Case Officer: Marcie Rejwerska

Date received (valid from): 9 May 2023 **Target Decision date:** 13 July 2023 (extended)

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site comprises a three storey terraced property on the west side of Market Place in the Reading town centre. The ground floor of the property is in commercial use and is currently vacant. The listing of the property reads as follows,

“MARKET PLACE 1. 5128 (West Side) Nos 23 to 26 (consec) SU 7173 NE 1/205 26.7.75. II GV 2. Early C19 loosely attributed to Henry or Nathaniel Briant. 3 storeys, Bath stone ashlar now rendered. Round corner. Moulded cope to parapet. Slate roof. Doric pilasters above ground floor level between each house with fluted caps. Modern shops with Doric piers. 2:2:2 ranges of glazing bar sash windows, 1st floor windows have carved brackets to cornices.”

The site is within the Market Place/London Street conservation area and the High Street Heritage Action Zone.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Advertisement consent and listed building consent is sought for new fascia signage to be externally illuminated and two projecting signs.

The proposed fascia signage will be made of marine-quality plywood painted in Farrow & Ball Pink (2002) with 3x LED trough lights above. Lettering on the fascia signage will be applied vinyl.

The proposed projecting signs are proposed to be slim line metal measuring 0.54m, 3.25m above the ground level.

Plans considered:

Design and Access, Planning and Heritage Statement, received 10 May 2023

Site location plan, dated 9 May 2023, received 10 May 2023

04/A Proposed sign details, dated 15 June 2023, received 21 June 2023

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

900802 - Front: fascia signs, box signs (window) and plaque (door) Flank: logo, sign and plaque (door) - Application permitted on 14/02/1991

900803 - Signage on frontage and flank of premises - Application permitted on 14/02/1991

900941 - Internal alterations of a three storey office block with basement - Application permitted on 14/02/1991

050125 - Changes to ground floor windows and doors, front and rear elevations; including replacement of rear basement fire exit door. Changes to floor levels, ground floor only, internal alterations. - Application permitted on 19/01/2006

060655 - Replace all windows on front elevation and enlarge ground floor windows. At the rear replace an existing window and enlarge the opening replace existing doors at ground and basement levels. - Application permitted on 19/01/2006

050978 - Temporary change of use to A1 (Charity Shop) whilst preserving existing A2 use (financial and professional services) - Application permitted on 12/08/2005

051250 - Halo illuminated fascia sign to ground floor level; 2 no. projecting signs to each side of fascia. - Application permitted on 22/02/2006

060137 - Additional signage to existing high-level sign and removal of existing light box and replace with name plate - Split decision 20/11/2006

060566 - Signs and advertisements on side elevation - Application refused on 02/05/2006

060591 - Signs and advertisements on side elevation - Split decision 02/05/2006

060692 - Additional signage to existing high-level sign and removal of existing light box and replace with name plate - Application withdrawn

071218 - Advertising to the street level office - Application permitted on 15/11/2007

071219 - Install two projecting and one fascia sign (divided into 3 no. groups of internally illuminated lettering) - Application permitted on 04/10/2007

211961 - Retrospective change of use of ground floor and basement from Class Ec (Professional Services) to Hot Food Takeaway (Sui Generis) and minor internal and external alterations associated with the change of use including new kitchen extract system and vent opening to rear door - Application permitted on 13/07/2022

211962 - Minor internal and external alterations associated with change of use from Class Ec (Professional Services) to Hot Food Takeaway (Sui Generis Use) including new kitchen extract system and air vent opening to rear door - Application permitted on 13/07/2022

221202 - Externally illuminated fascia sign, two externally illuminated projecting signs and 5 wall lights - Application permitted on 09/02/2023

221410 - Listed building consent for an externally illuminated fascia sign and two externally illuminated projecting signs. - Application permitted on 09/02/2023

221880 - Change of use of first, second and third floors from Class E to 4 x 1 bed flats and 1 x 2 bed flats (C3 use) - Application not yet determined

221881 - Internal and external alterations including new ventilation outlets to rear elevation associated with proposed change of use of first, second and third floors from Class E to 6 no 1 bed flats use C3 under planning application ref. 221880 - Application not yet determined

4. CONSULTATIONS

Internal consultations:

RBC CCTV - This is very close to one of our new CCTV cameras, so any illuminations would need to make sure they don't impact on the CCTV camera

RBC Transport - No objection subject to conditions.

RBC Conservation - No comments received.

CAAC - No comments received.

External consultations:

The following addresses were consulted by letter for both applications.

25-26 Market Place, Reading, RG1 2DG
176 Friar Street, Reading, RG1 1HU
St Laurence's Church, Friar Street, Reading
175 Friar Street, Reading
Reading Post Office, 21-22 Market Place, Reading, RG1 2DQ

No letters of representation received.

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.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY 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.

Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.

Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority in the exercise of its functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

National Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework
National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC7: DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM

CC8: SAFEGUARDING AMENITY

EN1: PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

EN3: ENHANCEMENT OF CONSERVATION AREAS

TR3: ACCESS, TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAY-RELATED MATTERS

OU4: ADVERTISEMENTS

CR2: DESIGN IN CENTRAL READING

SPG/SPD

Design Guide to Shopfronts (2022)

Market Place/London Street Conservation Area Appraisal (2007)

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APPRAISAL

The main issues are considered to be:

- i) Design and impact on character*
- ii) Amenity*
- iii) Public safety*

i) Design and impact on character

The Design Guide to Shopfronts SPD (2022) states that “*Modern shopfront designs and materials are often inappropriate as part of a historic building or within a conservation area*”

where they detract from the character or appearance the area is designed to protect” (Para 4.4).

The property has historically had aluminium fascia signs with numerous displays cluttering the front elevation windows. The proposed materials and design are considered a substantial improvement to the appearance of the property as well as the wider conservation area.

ii) Amenity

Policy OU4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) states,

All adverts shall comply with the following criteria:

- *Advertisements will not obstruct windows, any other sign already located on the building, or cut across significant architectural features such as historic fascias, windows, pilasters, cornices or scrolls; NO*
- *Where a shop or business occupies more than one adjacent unit, the advertisement will not run between the shopfronts; NO*
- *Advertisements on listed buildings or in Conservation Areas will respect or enhance the building or area, and will respect the key features of the special historic interest; PROPOSAL IS ACCEPTABLE*
- *Advertisements will not reduce visibility for users of the highway or accesses onto the highway; NO*
- *Illumination should not detract from the amenity of the area or pose a safety hazard to users of the highway; and NO*
- *Advertisements should not obscure the sight lines of cameras installed for public safety. NO; proposed lighting will be angled away from the CCTV camera and luminance controlled via condition.*

The proposed sign is considered acceptable in terms of Policies CC7 and OU4.

iii) 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:*
 - i. where the means of illumination is directly visible from any part of the road;*
 - 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; or **NO**
 - 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: **NO**
 - 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; or **NO**
 - 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**

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

Conclusion

The proposal has been assessed and the works are considered to be in line with the above policies and therefore Advertisement Consent and Listed Building Consent can be granted subject to conditions.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT ADVERT CONSENT

Subject to the following conditions:

- A1
- AD2
- AD1

GRANT LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

Subject to the following conditions:

- LB1
- LB2
- MLB