DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Application No: 230845/ADV
Address: Unit 6, Proctor End South, Reading, RG2 0GG
Proposal: Proposed signage including wall hanging signs, feature frames and building entrance signage.
Case Officer: David Brett
Applicant: ALDI Stores Ltd.
Received on (valid from): 16/06/2023
Target Date: 11/08/2023

Site Description and Surrounding Area
The application site comprises a large retail unit at the south-west corner of Reading Gateway, a retail and leisure park located adjacent to the A33. The unit was vacant at the time of the application, most recently occupied by Toys R Us in April 2018. At the time of the application, other units in Reading Gateway included a hotel, drive-thru restaurant and kitchen furniture shop. Landscaping, vehicle parking and access have been implemented in accordance with the original permission for the site. Reading Gateway forms part of the wider Worton Grange development.

The proposal site is not within a Conservation Area or Listed.

Fig 1. Front of Unit 6, Proctor End South. Photo taken by case officer on 06/02/2023

Fig 2. Aerial Image, site outlined in red. Image retrieved from Google Maps on 15/05/2023

Proposal
The proposal seeks advertisement consent for:

- ALDI Wall Hanging Sign
    - 2.47m x 2.07m x 0.12m
    - Illuminated
    - Quantity: 3
- ALDI Wall Hanging Sign
    - 6.64m x 2.67m x 0.12m
    - Illuminated
    - Quantity: 1
- ALDI Feature Frame Signage (1)
    - 3.2m x 7.15m x 0.15m
    - Illuminated
    - Quantity: 1
- ALDI Feature Frame Signage (2)
    - 3.2m x 7.82m x 0.15m
    - Illuminated
    - Quantity: 1
- ALDI Feature Frame Signage (3)
    - 3.2m x 6.39m x 0.15m
    - Illuminated
    - Quantity: 1
- Building Entrance Signage
    - 1.3m x 1.4m
    - Non-illuminated
    - Quantity: 1
- Building Entrance Signage – Opening Hours
    - 0.63m x 1.47m
    - Non-illuminated

Plans/Documents Considered
The agent supplied the following plans for this application:

- Site Location Plan Advert Consent – 210853-1010 P01
- Proposed Site Plan – Building Signage Advert Consent – 210853-1310 P03
- Proposed Elevations Advert Consent – 210853-1410 P03

Received on 16/06/2023

Consultations

Reading Borough Council, Environmental Protection received on 27/06/2023

- In order for me to confirm that the signage won't cause loss of amenity due to glare, please can the applicant submit some photos to show what the signs are likely to look like, along with details on hours of illumination, and how the level of illumination will be minimised to prevent glare.

Reading Borough Council, Transport Development Control received on 11/07/2023

There are no transport objections to the proposed signage. The proposed signs as detailed in the application form will be illuminated to a maximum level of 108 cd/m^2 with a static display which is acceptable.

Relevant Planning History

230874/APC - Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 7 (noise assessment), 11 (Delivery and Servicing Plan) and 12 (external lighting) of application 221908 – Application To Be Determined.

230846/ADV - Proposed 2 no. pole signs. – Application To Be Determined.

230694/APC - Application for approval of details reserved by condition 5 (Construction Programme) of Application 221908 -

221908/FUL - Use of Unit 6 (Unit C)for the sale of food, external alterations, installation of electric vehicle charging bays and associated alterations to car park. – Application Permitted on 18/05/2023

200601/APC - Discharge of condition 7 (Travel Plan) of planning permission 190890/FUL – Conditions Discharged 28/07/2020

200356/APC - Discharge of condition 6 (Car Parking Management Plan) of planning permission 190890/FUL – Conditions Discharged 28/07/2020

200319/APC - Discharge of conditions 3 (cycle parking), 4 (refuse and recycling) and 5 (CMS) of planning permission 190890/FUL – Conditions Discharged 28/07/2020

190890/FUL - Change of use of unit from retail (Class A1) to gym (Class D2) and insertion of 1,105sqm GIA mezzanine floor – Application Permitted 05/12/2019 (Committee Decision)

171137/FUL - Installation of 6 No. louvres onto the external elevations of an existing retail unit. Installation of 2 No. natural ventilation turret onto the roof of an existing retail unit – Application Permitted 01/09/2017

151944/FUL – A hybrid application seeking outline planning permission for the development of up to 175 new homes, including affordable housing (with all matters reserved apart from access) and full planning permission for the development of 12 commercial units in flexible use within Classes B1c, B2 and B8, two car showrooms with MOT and servicing (Sui Generis), three retail warehouse units (Class A1), 120 bed hotel (Class C1), pub with restaurant facility (Class A4), coffee shop (Class A1), restaurant (Class A3), and bank (Class A2). New vehicular access from Basingstoke Road and Imperial Way. Bus stop facilities, hard and soft landscaping and other ancillary development (summarised description) – Application Permitted 14/04/2016

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

- 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

The application has been assessed against the following policies:

National

National Planning Policy Framework 2021;
National Planning Policy Guidance 2014 onwards;
NPPG: Advertisements;

Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019)

- CC7: Design and the Public Realm
- CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
- OU4: Advertisements

Appraisal

a) Advertisements

The Reading Borough Local Plan advertisements policy (OU4) states that all adverts need to comply with the following criteria in order to be approved:

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.	**Complies**
Where a shop or business occupies more than one adjacent unit, the advertisement will not run between the shopfronts.	**Complies**
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.	**N/A – Proposal site is not Listed or within a Conservation Area.**
Advertisements will not reduce visibility for users of the highway or accesses onto the highway.	**Complies**
Illumination should not detract from the amenity of the area or pose a safety hazard to users of the highway.	**Complies – No objections are raised by the Transport Team subject to condition relating to maximum luminance of the signage.**

Advertisements should not obscure the sight lines of cameras installed for public safety.	**Complies**

As per the Professional Lighting Guide 05: The Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements, Institute of Lighting Professionals, 2015; "Where the illuminated advertisement consists of
fret cut, individual letters or individual elements such as exposed light sources (e.g. cold cathode tubes) the illuminated area shall be defined as the background of the advertisement. That is the area of the background in a simple geometric shape or a combination of such shapes in which the letters or elements are completely contained."

In accordance with paragraph 4.7.29 of the Reading Borough Local Plan, policy OU4 sets out the maximum illumination levels for illuminated signage in certain zones of Reading. These zones are defined in paragraph 4.7.30 as follows:

- Zone E1: Intrinsically dark areas.
- Zone E2: Low district brightness areas (e.g. rural-urban fringe).
- Zone E3: Medium district brightness areas (e.g. district and local centres and urban areas).
- Zone E4: High district brightness areas (e.g. the core of the centre).

The proposal site is considered Zone E3, due to the predominantly commercial setting of the surrounding area. Therefore, in accordance with policy OU4, the maximum illumination levels where the area of the illuminated area for the sign is more than $10m^2$ is 300 cd/m^2, where the area is less than $10m^2$ the maximum illumination levels is $600m^2$.

The maximum illumination level for each sign will be secured via condition to the approval of this application to protect the visual amenity and avoid excessive glare that could lead to a danger to highway users in accordance with Policy CC7 and OU4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019. The applicant specified on the application form and plans that the illuminance levels would be up to 108 cd/m^2 for each sign. A condition will therefore be included to ensure that the illuminance levels of the signs do not exceed 108 cd/m^2.

NPPG: Advertisements – Considerations affecting 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*	**Complies**
(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*	**Complies**
(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)*	**Complies**
(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	**Complies - Maximum luminance to be secured via condition as detailed above**
	ii) which, because of their colour, could be mistaken for, or confused with, traffic lights or any other authorised signals	**Complies**
	iii) which, because of their size or brightness, could result in glare and dazzle, or distract road-users, particularly in misty or wet weather	**Complies**
	iv) which are subject to frequent changes of the display	**Complies**
(e)	*those which incorporate moving or apparently moving elements in their display, or successive individual advertisements which do not display the whole message*	**Complies**
(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*	**Complies**
(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	**Complies**
	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	**Complies**
(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)	**Complies**
	ii) invite drivers to turn right on a main road, or where there is fast moving traffic	**Complies**
	iii) invite drivers to turn, but are sited so close to the turning that there is not enough time to signal and turn safely	**Complies**
	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	**Complies**
	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.	**Complies**

Conclusion

The development has been assessed and the works are considered to be in accordance with the above relevant policies and Advertisement Consent can be granted.

Recommendation

GRANT

Conditions

A1: STANDARD ADVERT REQUIREMENTS
No advertisement is to be displayed without the permission of the owner of the site or any other person with an interest in the site entitled to grant permission.

i. No advertisement shall be sited or displayed so as to:
   a) endanger persons using any highway, railway, waterway, dock, harbour or aerodrome (civil or military);
   b) obscure, or hinder the ready interpretation of, any traffic sign, railway signal or aid to navigation by water or air; or
   c) hinder the operation of any device used for the purpose of security or surveillance or for measuring the speed of any vehicle.
ii. Any advertisement displayed, and any site used for the display of advertisements, shall be maintained in a condition that does not impair the visual amenity of the site.
iii. Any structure or hoarding erected or used principally for the purpose of displaying advertisements shall be maintained in a condition that does not endanger the public.
iv. Where an advertisement is required under these Regulations to be removed, the site shall be left in a condition that does not endanger the public or impair visual amenity.

REASON: In accordance with Schedule 2, Regulation 2(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

AD1: Advert Luminance
The maximum luminance from the signs hereby consented shall not exceed 108 cd/m2.

REASON: To protect the visual amenity and avoid excessive glare that could lead to a danger to highway users in accordance with Policy CC7 and OU4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

AD2: APPROVED PLANS (ADVERTS)
The advertisements hereby consented shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

- Site Location Plan Advert Consent – 210853-1010 P01
- Proposed Site Plan – Building Signage Advert Consent – 210853-1310 P03
- Proposed Elevations Advert Consent – 210853-1410 P03

Received on 16/06/2023

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the advertisement is carried out in accordance the details hereby approved in accordance with Policy OU4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Informatives