

Delegated Application Report

Address: The Heights School Mapledurham Playing Fields Upper Woodcote Road

Application No: 210888/ADV

Proposal: 1 x fascia sign to north elevation of school building

Target Date: 23/07/2021

Case Officer: Matt Burns

Site Description and Surrounding Area

The two storey school building occupies the north west corner of Mapledurham Playing Fields. To the east of the site is the playing fields pavilion building and community car park, to the north and west are residential dwellings on Hewett Close and Hewett Avenue whilst to the south is the playing field pitches.

Proposal

Advertisement consent is sought for 1 x externally illuminated fascia sign to north elevation of school building which would display the name of the school and its logo. The sign would measure 2m x 1.9m and would project 0.1m from the face of the building. The base of the sign would be positioned 4.5m above ground level and the text and logo would be finished in grey (RAL: 7046) set on a white background. The sign would be externally illuminated by a single external luminaire uplighter.

Plans/ Documents Submitted

- THPS-JBH-V2-ZZ-DR-E-8001 C01 - Electrical Services External Lighting Layout
- FS0280 NOV V1 ZZ DR A 01000 C13 - Site Plan
- Kier Construction, The Heights School Reading, document ref. PL71926 Version 3 F (27/04/2021) pages 1 to 3
- Zumtobel Project 1 (26.05.2021) pages 1 to 2

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 28th May 2021

Relevant Planning History

Includes:

171023FUL - Erection of 2FE primary school (350 pupils) with associated landscaping, multi-use games area (MUGA), car and cycle parking, and servicing - Granted (S016 linked)

182200VARIAT - Erection of 2FE primary school (350 pupils) with associated landscaping, multi-use games area (MUGA), car and cycle parking, and servicing, without complying with conditions 2 (approved plans), 9 (landscaping scheme) and 10 (details of hard and soft landscaping of the MPF Community Car Park) of planning permission 171023/FUL - Granted (S106 linked)

190240REG3 -Landscaping works to Mapledurham playing fields - Granted

Consultation Responses

RBC Transport - No objection, subject to a condition to control the luminance level of the sign.

RBC CCTV - No objection.

External Consultation

No statutory consultation is required for advertisement consent applications. Notwithstanding this, two letters of objection have been received, including a letter from the Warren and District Residents Association (WADRA), raising the following issues:

- Proper consultation on the application was not carried out, local residents who will be greatly affected by the sign were not notified individually
- Light intrusion for residents of Hewett Close and intrusion of privacy
- The sign will adversely impact on the quality of life of local residents

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):

OU4: Advertisements

Appraisal

The main issues are considered to be:

- i) Amenity
- ii) Public safety

i) Amenity

Policy OU4 (Advertisements) states that:

Advertisements will respect the building or structure on which they are located and/or their surroundings and setting in terms of size, location, design, materials, colour, noise, lettering, amount and type of text, illumination and luminance, and will not have a detrimental effect on public safety. The cumulative impact of adverts will be taken into account, and a proliferation of advertisements that detrimentally affects visual or aural amenity or public safety will not be acceptable

The size and appearance of the proposed single fascia sign with simple grey graphics upon a white background is considered to respect to integrate satisfactorily with and respect the scale and appearance of the existing school building and to not appear unduly prominent to views from the surrounding area.

However, given the location of the site and its outer suburban location, adjacent to a playing fields and area of designated local space the provision of high level illuminated signage is not considered appropriate. Illumination of the sign at first floor level would result in glare and luminance which would appear visually prominent as you enter the school site from Upper Woodcote Road and when viewed from the rear of the adjacent residential properties to the north on Woodcote Road which would be detrimental to the visual amenity of the area and adjacent residential occupiers. Therefore, a condition is to be attached to the advertisement consent to stipulate that the advertisements are not to be illuminated at any time.

ii) Public Safety

Transport officers recommend a condition to secure that the proposed illumination of the signage does not exceed 115cdm² to ensure that it would not cause a distraction to highway users. However, as set out above a condition is already recommended to ensure that the signage is not illuminated at any time such that there would be no distraction to highway users. As a fascia sign positioned at first floor level the signage is not considered detrimental to pedestrian safety in this location.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT advertisement consent subject to the following conditions:

Conditions

1. The advertisements hereby consented shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
 - FS0280 NOV V1 ZZ DR A 01000 C13 - Site Plan
 - Kier Construction, The Heights School Reading, document ref. PL71926 Version 3 F (27/04/2021) pages 1 to 3
- Received by the Local Planning Authority on 28th May 2021

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

2. The advertisements hereby consented shall not be either internally or externally illuminated at any time.

REASON: To protect the visual amenity of the surrounding area in accordance with Policy CC7 and OU4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

3. The Standard Conditions:

- i. 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.

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

- ii. 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.

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

- iii. 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.

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

- iv. 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.

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

- v. 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.

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.