

DELEGATED HOUSEHOLDER APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Abbey

App Ref: 211494/ADV

Address: Apex Plaza, Forbury Road, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 1AX

Proposals: Two banners applied to east and west corners of Apex scaffolding

Case Officer: James Schofield

Date received (valid from): 9 September 2021 **Target Decision date:** 12 November 2021 (ext)

1. SITE DESCRIPTION AND CONTEXT

The development site relates to a large office building next to Reading Station. The site is within the Reading Central Area. The site is within the context of Grade II listed building, the Rising Sun Public House. Forbury Road is lined with trees which benefit from a Tree Protection Order.

2. PROPOSALS

The application seeks advertisement consent for two non-illuminated temporary banner signs attached to the scaffolding serving the alterations being made to the front elevations of the building. Documents considered;

Application letter
Banner Design
Drg No. 0300 Site Location Plan
Drg No. 0301 Block Plan
Drg No. 0322 Existing East and West Elevations
Drg No. 0370 Proposed Ground Floor Plan
Drg No. 0372 Proposed East and West Elevation
Received on 9th of September 2021

3. CONSULTEEES

Heritage

Heritage Officer was consulted; however, no comment was received before the final recommendation was made.

Transport

The Transport Officer had no objections.

External

No public consultation is required for applications of this type.

4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Application No: 210343
Description: Exterior painting and replacement of glazing within retained window frames.
Decision: Permitted on 22/04/2021

Application No: 210494
Description: Refurbishment of the southern entrance, comprising the replacement of the entrance canopy, curtain walling and entrance doors together with re-landscaping.

Decision: Permitted on 25/06/2021

5. 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.

6. 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

CR10 Tall Buildings

EN1 Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

TR3 Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters

OU4 Advertisements

6. APPRAISAL

6.1 Amenity

Policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019) requires development to be of a high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area in Reading in which it is located. Policy CR10 requires proposals for or changes to existing tall buildings to have carefully designed upper and middle sections of their elevations.

The appearance of the proposed temporary advertisements on the scaffolding are large in scale and relate to the changes to the building permitted in *application number 210494*. Because the banners are not illuminated and are to be fastened to temporary scaffolding which will obscure views of the building while works are underway, the impact of the proposal on the appearance of the building itself is considered to be minimal.

The banner to be hung on the scaffolding of the eastern elevation is proposed to be placed in a location which does not overlap with any windows within the existing building. However, the banner to be hung on the scaffolding of the western elevation would appear to overlap with four of the uppermost windows second from the left as seen on *Drg No. 0372 Proposed East and West Elevation*. However, it is noted in the Construction Method Statement approved in application number 210494 that the temporary hoarding to be erected will already obscure these windows and are temporary in nature. As such, the banners proposed in this application are only as permanent as the hoarding. The impact on the appearance of the skyline and any nearby listed buildings is considered subordinate, conditional on, and relatively minor compared to the visual impact of the temporary hoarding and scaffolding.

Because the proposal is conditional on the implementation of the construction phase of a previously approved application, where the attached conditions address the management of the TPO protected trees on site, there are no projected impacts on the trees from the proposed advertisements.

As such, the proposal is considered to comply with Policies CC7, CR10, EN1, and OU4 of the Local Plan 2019 provided the banners are not retained any longer than the hoarding and scaffolding to which they are proposed to be attached.

6.2 Public Safety

No works considered by this application would cause a physical obstruction to the public using a public highway, as they are to be attached to a temporary structure well above any such public highway. The proposed banners would be viewable from the trainline adjacent to the site, however, they are not proposed to be illuminated and as such do not pose a risk to the safe operation of the railway. As such, the proposal is acceptable in terms of Policy TR3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019).

7. CONCLUSION

In light of the above assessment the proposal is considered to accord with the requirements of the development plan and is therefore recommended for approval subject to conditions.

8. RECOMMENDATION

GRANT subject to conditions:

1. A1 Standard Advert Condition
2. Standard Advert Time Limit
3. AD2 Approved Plans