

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT - Application 171652/ADV

Address: St Martins Precinct, Church Street, Caversham, Reading

Proposal: Erection of 15 hanging signs associated with the retail units at St Martin's Precinct

Case officer: Ethne Humphreys

Site Description and Surrounding Area: The application site relates to the St Martin's Precinct, located on the southern side of Church Street, Caversham, and opposite the junction with Hemdean Road. TPO 58/13 applies to the trees within the precinct.

The site is located within Caversham District Centre and within a key frontage. The western part of the site is within Flood Zone 2 as designated by the Environment Agency and the site is within an Air Quality Management Area.

Proposal: The application seeks advertisement consent for 15 hanging signs associated with the retail units of St Martin's Precinct. They would be positioned perpendicular to the building frontage of the retail units, under the canopy.

The proposed signs would be positioned 2.53m above ground level and would project 1.20m from the face of the building. They would measure 0.30(H) x 1.10(W) x 0.10(D). The maximum height of the letters and symbols would be 24cm. The proposed signs would be of differing colours, relating to the brand of retail units they would serve.

None of the proposed signs would be illuminated.

Plans Considered:

Drawing No: Site Location Plan Phase 1b Canopy Signage PP_AD_00P

Drawing No: Hanging Sign Specification

Drawing No: Artwork Designs

Received 21st September 2017

Drawing No: Phase 1b Under Canopy Signage PP_AD_01 Rev P1

Received 16th November 2017

Relevant Planning History:

Extensive on the site as a whole, most relevant:

140997 Erection of new and extended retail (use class A1) floorspace, new restaurant (use class A3), new leisure (use class D2) floorspace, residential apartments (use class C3), car

park works (including erection of a single storey deck and reconfiguration at ground level) and associated landscaping, surfacing, public realm and shopfront improvement works. Permitted subject to Legal Agreement 31/03/2015

Consultation Responses:

Transport: No objection.

Natural Environment: Verbally confirmed no objection subject to informative.

No neighbour letters of representation have been received.

Summary of discussions with applicant/agent:

The agent was advised that whilst the application form and supporting statement comments that the proposal is for 15 hanging signs, drawing no: PP-AD-01 P (Phase 1b Under Canopy Signage) appeared to indicate signage proposed on the canopy fascia. The agent confirmed this was an error and a revised drawing was received just showing the proposed signage under the canopy.

No pre-application advice was sought for this specific scheme prior to the submission of this application.

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

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. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. However the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making (NPPF paragraph 12).

In this regard, the NPPF states that due weight should be given to the adopted policies of the Local Development Framework (LDF) (Core Strategy, Sites and Detailed Policies Document and Reading Central Area Action Plan) 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).

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.

Accordingly, the National Planning Policy Framework and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant:

Reading Borough LDF Core Strategy (2008) (altered 2012)

- CS7 Design and the Public Realm
- CS20 Reading Transport Strategy
- CS38 Trees, Hedges and Woodlands

Reading Sites and Detailed Policies Document (SDPD 2012) (altered 2015)

- DM4 Amenity
- DM12 Access, Traffic and Highway Related Matters
- DM22 Advertisements

Appraisal

Design, impact on the host building, character of the street scene

Policy DM22 of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document 2012 (amended 2015) 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. It further states that the proliferation of advertisements that detrimentally affects visual or aural amenity will not be acceptable; that advertisements will not obstruct windows located on the building and that advertisements above ground floor level are also likely to have detrimental effects on visual amenity.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 67 states that ‘poorly placed advertisements can have a negative impact on the appearance of the built and natural environments’.

The proposed signs are considered to be respectful to the building in terms of scale and location, and considered to be positioned satisfactorily in relation to the existing canopy, subject to standard advertisement consent conditions. None of the signage is proposed to be illuminated and the colours and design would be reflective of the retail brands they would represent and in keeping with the retail character of the St Martins Precinct. Given the above, and in the context of the existing frontage, the proposed advertisements are not considered harmful to the visual amenities of the street scene or the wider St Martin’s Precinct.

The proposals are considered to comply with policies CS7 and DM22.

Amenity/Transport/Public Safety

Due to the nature of the proposals, whilst visible, they are not considered to result in any material harm to the amenities of the surrounding occupiers. There are no transport objections to the proposed advertisements, which are not proposed to be illuminated, and which are not considered to result in any unacceptable harm to highway users, pedestrians or public safety. As such the proposal is considered to be acceptable in public safety terms.

The proposals are considered to comply with Policy DM12.

RECOMMENDATION:

GRANT, subject to conditions and informatives

Conditions

1. 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

2. The advertisements hereby approved shall be displayed in accordance with the following approved drawings only:

Drawing No: Site Location Plan Phase 1b Canopy Signage PP_AD_00P

Drawing No: Hanging Sign Specification

Drawing No: Artwork Designs

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Drawing No: Phase 1b Under Canopy Signage PP_AD_01 Rev P1

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Reason: To clarify which drawings are approved.

Informatives:

1. Your attention is drawn to the terms and conditions of this consent. Any advertisement displayed which differs materially from the approved plans and details, or does not comply with any condition(s) attached to the consent may result in the Council taking action to remedy the breach of advertisement control. If you are in any doubt please contact the Council.
2. Approved works may require separate approval under the Building Regulations. Please contact the Council's Building Control service for further advice on (0118) 937 2449.
3. The applicant is reminded that the adjacent trees are protected by Tree Preservation Order TPO 58/13; therefore, care should be taken during implementation of this consent. If any tree works are required during the process, an application seeking consent must be submitting to the Local Planning Authority.
4. The decision to grant consent follows the positive and proactive consideration of the application, including issuing the decision within the statutory time period.