

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Address: 132 - 136 Caversham Road

Application No: 180474

Proposal: 1 internally illuminated fascia sign and 1 replacement totem sign within front forecourt.

Applicant: Easyhotel

Date received (valid from): 15/03/2018

Target Decision date: Originally 09/05/2018, but extension of time agreed until 06/06/18

Case officer: Tom French

1. Site description and Surrounding Area

The Site is located on the corner of Caversham Road and Thames Avenue, to the north west of Reading Town Centre and Reading Train Station. The site falls within the Reading Central Area but lays approximately 150m from the Reading Town Centre Central Core boundary.

The surrounding area is characterised by residential and commercial uses comprising a mix of restaurants and shops, together with hotels. The area immediately to the rear of the site on Thames Avenue is wholly in residential use.

The application site building is not listed, nor is it in a conservation area. The site is in flood zone 2 and a designated air quality management area.

2. The Proposal

The application submission comprises a fascia sign and replacement totem sign. More specifically:

Fascia sign:

The proposed fascia sign would replace the previous awning and would also be mounted above the main entrance. The proposed sign would be sited higher than the previous awning, with the base of the proposed sign being 3.4m above ground level. The sign would be 1.8m wide and 0.6m high. The sign would be orange (RAL 2004) with white text displaying the company's name and internally illuminated to 200cd/m².

Totem sign:

The proposed totem sign would replace the existing and would be of the same dimensions and in the same location. The proposed sign would be 0.9m wide, 3.3m high and 0.1m deep. The sign would be orange (RAL 2004) with white text displaying the company's name and internally illuminated to 200cd/m².

In addition, the proposed plans and application form also detail that advertisement consent is sought for a window panel is proposed in each of the four windows that face the highway in the ground floor bays. The panels would be 1.5m wide and 0.2m high and located along the top edge of the windows. The proposed window panels would be orange (RAL 2004). In respect of the window panels officers consider that these fall outside of the definition of an advertisement and therefore are not referenced in the description of development and this specific plan is not included on the decision notice. An informative will be added to the decision notice to clarify this.

As a point of clarity, for planning purposes, 'advertisement' is defined in section 336(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) as: "any word, letter, model, sign,

placard, board, notice, awning, blind, device or representation, whether illuminated or not, in the nature of, and employed wholly or partly for the purposes of, advertisement, announcement or direction, and (without prejudice to the previous provisions of this definition) includes any hoarding or similar structure used or designed, or adapted for use and anything else principally used, or designed or adapted principally for use, for the display of advertisements.” Accordingly, it is clarified that the graphic and associated signage are considered to be advertisements requiring advertisement consent.

3. Consultation

Transport

The RBC Transport Development Control Advisor provided consultation raising no objection to the proposed advertisement consent subject to a condition restricting levels of luminance.

4. Plans and Documents Considered

The Council, in reaching its recommendation, has taken into consideration the following plans & documents:

Drawing No.:

- 003108 Rev: R01 - Item: 00.1 (not to be referenced on the decision notice, as it effectively duplicates 01.1 fascia sign and includes a note on the plan stating “is NOT a proposed signage item”)
- 003108 Rev: R01 - Item: 00.2 (Items 01 and 03 only, not item 2 - window panels)
- 003108 Rev: R01 - Item: 01.1
- 003108 Rev: R01 - Item: 02.1 (not to be referenced on the decision notice)
- 003108 Rev: R01 - Item: 03.1

As received: 14/03/2018

- Easyhotel Reading - Proposed signage locations (Items 01 and 03 only, not item 2 - window panels)

As received: 29/05/2018

5. Relevant Planning History

The application site has an extensive planning history. The most recent and relevant are listed below:

172066 - APC - Application to discharge planning condition 14 of planning approval 170366 - Condition Discharged

170366 - FUL - Construction of a two storey rear extension and external alterations to the front (south-west) and side (north-east) elevations to create additional hotel rooms - Application Permitted

041299 - FUL - Internal alterations and three storey rear extension to hotel - Application Permitted

030499 - FUL - Change of use from hotel to 8 residential dwellings on first and second floor with (A1) retail and 'ancillary' office on ground floor. Extensions to ground, first and second floors - Application Refused

6. 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.

7. Relevant Planning 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. The Development Plan for Reading relevant to the application site comprises the Reading Local Development Framework '*Core Strategy*' 2008 (Altered 2015) and '*Sites and Detailed Policies Document*' 2012 (Altered 2015).

The '*National Planning Policy framework*' ('NPPF') 2012 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) (Core Strategy and Sites and Detailed Policies Document) 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.

8. Relevant Policies

The application has been assessed against the following policies:

National

National Planning Policy Framework;
National Planning Policy Guidance;

RBC Local Development Framework

Core Strategy (2008) (Altered 2015):
CS7 (Design and the Public Realm)

Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012) (Altered 2015)

DM12: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters

DM22: Advertisements

9. Appraisal

The main issues to be considered are:

- i) Amenity
- ii) Public safety

i) Amenity

Fascia sign

The proposed fascia sign would be of relatively modest proportions and would effectively replace the previous awning (of a former hotel operator). The proposed fascia sign would be of an equivalent width to the previous awning. However, the proposed sign would protrude 0.08m from the front elevation of the application property, whereas the previous awning protrudes 2.5m from the front elevation. Whilst the visibility of the hotel would be increased by the internally illuminated orange fascia signs, it is considered to be of a scale, design and appearance compatible with the character of the street scene and other nearby fascia sign without giving rise to undue clutter.

Totem sign

The proposed totem sign would be the same size and in the same location as the totem sign utilised by the previous hotel operator. Although somewhat large in height and close to the highway, given that the existing sign is also orange with white text, the proposed sign is considered appropriate to the host building and to integrate satisfactorily with the street scene and surrounding area.

ii) Public Safety

The proposed advertisements are located in a position that would not cause a physical obstruction to members of the public using the highway. All illuminated signage does not exceed a level of luminance of 200cd/m² (as specified on the application forms) which is unlikely to cause a distraction to users of the highway. As such, subject to the luminance levels being secured via condition, the proposals are considered to be acceptable in public safety terms in accordance with DM12: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012).

10. Recommendation

GRANT 180474/ADV in accordance with Regulation 14 (1) (a and b) of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended).

Subject to the following conditions:

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.

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.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and drawings:

Drawing No.:

- 003108 Rev: R01 - Item: 00.2 (Items 01 and 03 only, not item 2 - window panels)
- 003108 Rev: R01 - Item: 01.1
- 003108 Rev: R01 - Item: 03.1

As received: 14/03/2018

- Easyhotel Reading - Proposed signage locations (Items 01 and 03 only, not item 2 - window panels)

As received: 29/05/2018

Reason: because permission is granted in respect of the development as detailed in the approved plans only.

3. The maximum luminance from the illuminated signage should not exceed 200cd/m².

Reason: To avoid glare, which could lead to danger to highway users and in the interests of amenity in accordance with Policy CS20 of the Reading Borough Council Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2008 (Altered 2015) and Policy DM12 and Sites and Detailed Policies document Policy DM12.

Informatives

1. Your attention is drawn to the terms and conditions of this permission. 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 permission 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 decision to grant planning permission follows the positive and proactive consideration of the issues raised by this planning application and issuing the decision within the agreed time period.
3. Any incidental works affecting the adjoining highway shall be approved and licenced by the Council's Highways section at 19 Bennet Road, Reading, RG2 0QX, telephone 01189372138, before any development is commenced.
4. For the avoidance of doubt, it is advised that the 4 window panels (item 02 on plans 003108 Rev: R01 - Item: 00.2 & Easyhotel Reading - Proposed signage locations) are not approved by this advertisement consent. The 4 window panels are considered to fall outside of the definition of an advertisement, as per section 336(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), and therefore have not been considered as part of this advertisement consent application. As per the description of development, this application is solely in relation to 1 fascia sign (Item 01) and 1 totem sign (Item 03).