

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward:

App Ref: PL/24/0932 Full planning permission

Address: Broad Street, Reading

Proposal: Proposed addition of a statue of Paddington Bear onto an existing Bench in Reading Town Centre.

Applicant: Andrea Howard

Received date: 2024-07-23

Target Decision date: Extension of time agreed to 27 September 2024

Case Officer: Stephen Vigar

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The site comprises land occupied by a large curved bench located in the centre of Broad Street to the west of Chain Street and Union Street.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Full planning permission is sought for a statue of Paddington Bear onto an existing Bench in Reading Town Centre. This forms part of a wider provision nationally relating to a film launch. The sculpture would be fibreglass with a painted finish and bolted to the existing bench.

Reading is the home town of the Paddington Bear author Michael Bond.

The site is close to 89 Broad St (Waterstones) which is Grade II listed.

3. CONSULTATIONS

The following were consulted:

- Transport Development Control
- Reading's Economy & Destination Agency Consultations

A site notice was displayed on Broad Street.

No letters of representation have been received.

Highways Authority – no objection provided the sculpture is located on an existing bench.

4. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

CC7 – DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM

TR3: ACCESS, TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAY-RELATED MATTERS

RL2: SCALE AND LOCATION OF RETAIL, LEISURE AND CULTURE DEVELOPMENT

CR2: DESIGN IN CENTRAL READING

CR3: PUBLIC REALM IN CENTRAL READING

CR4: LEISURE, CULTURE AND TOURISM IN CENTRAL READING

5. APPRAISAL

The proposal has cultural links with Reading as the author of the Paddington Bear stories lived in Reading. There are therefore cultural and tourism benefits resulting from the proposal.

The proposal would bring visual interest to the location and enhance the public realm at this location.

As above, the proposal would be located in front of 89 Broad Street (Waterstones), a listed building. The proposal is not considered to affect the setting of this listed building due to its relatively small size and positioning as part of existing street furniture.

There would be an element of harm in terms of the loss of an area of seating. However, it would be a small loss, with other seating areas available within the wider Broad Street.

The proposal would not obstruct the highway or emergency access routes.

6. CONCLUSION

The proposal would result in social and economic benefits due to its cultural associations. The proposal would visually enhance its immediate setting. The loss of seating is considered to be outweighed by these benefits. Overall, the proposal would be a positive addition to Broad Street. The proposal is considered to comply with policies CC7, RL2, CR3, CR4 and TR3 on this basis.

7. RECOMMENDATION

Approve, subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall begin no later than three years from the date of this planning permission.

REASON: In pursuance of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) in order to prevent an accumulation of unimplemented planning permissions.

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

Paddington Updated Site Plan (002) received 23 September 2024

Paddington on Bench Sculpture 2024 v3 dated 17 September 2024, received 23 September 2024

Location Plan, received 23 July 2024

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out and adhered to in accordance with the application form and associated details hereby approved.

3. The materials to be used in the construction of the external surfaces of this development shall be as specified on the plans and/or application forms unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: In the interests of visual amenity and ensuring the new development responds positively to the local context and character in accordance with Policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Informatives:

1.
 - i) The attention of the applicant is drawn to Section 59 of the Highways Act 1980, which enables the Highway Authority to recover expenses due to damage caused by extraordinary traffic.
 - ii) Any works affecting the Highway shall be in accordance with Reading Borough's Council's document "Guidance Notes for Activities on the Public Highway within the Borough of Reading". The applicant should note that compliance with this document is mandatory and licences to work on the Highway will only be issued if the requirements contained within it are met. A copy can be obtained from the Council's website.