

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Katesgrove Ward

App Ref: PL/25/0458 LBC & PL/25/0460 ADV

Address: 52, London Street, Reading, Reading, RG1 4SQ

Proposal: Reinstating a hanging blade sign and changing the fascia signage to the front facade, Removing the existing signage to the rear facade, making good and redecorating.

Applicant: Mr Ashwin Ahuja

Received date: 27/06/2025 (Ext)

Target Decision date: 27/06/2025 (EOT)

Case Officer: Marcelina Rejwarska

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is a two-storey, Grade II listed building on the west side of London Street. The official listing reads as follows:

LONDON STREET 1. 5128 (West Side) Nos 48 to 52 (even) SU 7173 SE 3/172 II GV 2. Mid C18 altered. 2½ storeys. Painted brick, brick block eaves cornice. Mansard old tile roof (No 52 has lower pitched roof). 4 gabled dormers. 5 windows on 1st floor (early-mid C19 replacements probably), Nos 48 and 50 tripartite, No 52 late glazed; 2 others. Modern shop fronts, No 50 early C20. Rear rebuilt except No 52.

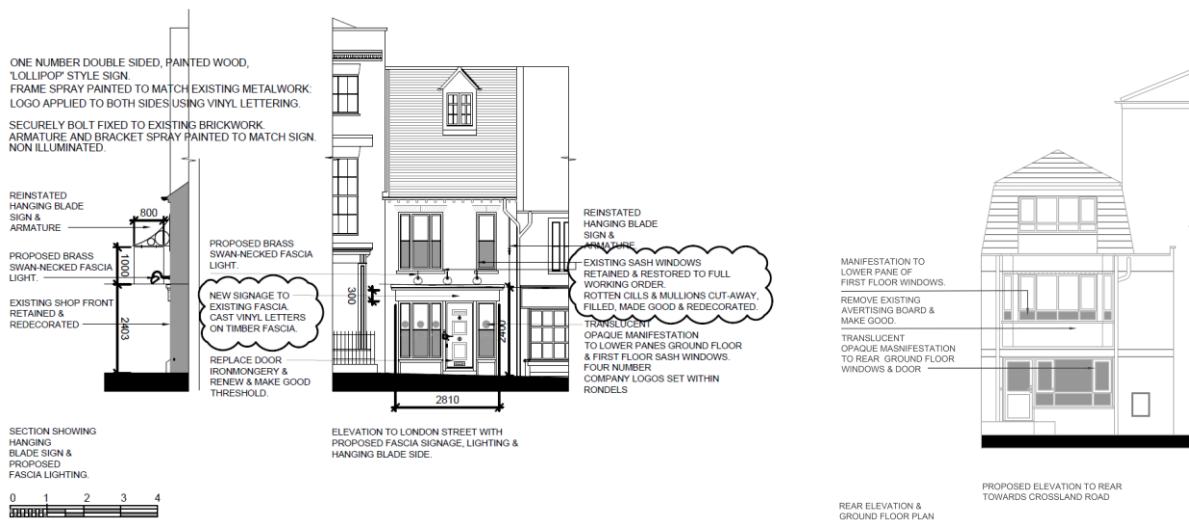
The site is also within the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area. The building is currently vacant, having previously been in use as a beauty clinic. The front façade of the building had been previously demolished in the 1980s and retains no original features.



Left: Site photo dated 1982, source: Reading Libraries Online. Right: Site photo taken by case officer on 2 May 2025.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Listed building consent and advertisement consent are sought for reinstatement of a hanging sign on the front elevation (first floor level), changing of the existing fascia on the front elevation and removal of the fascia at the rear elevation. New swan-necked cowl lights are proposed to replace the existing modern lighting above the fascia, with a limit of 500cd/m². The site is intended to be occupied by a health clinic and as such obscure film is to be applied to most windows to provide privacy to its users.



Proposed elevations

2.1. Information Submitted:

Location Plan, received 25 March 2025

25001/ELE/900 52 London St Existing Elevations, received 25 March 2025

Design and Access/Heritage Statement, received 28 April 2025

3M Dusted Crystal White Technical Specification, received 14 May 2025

25001/ELE/920 Rev A Proposed Rear Elevations, received 15 May 2025

25001/ELE/910 Rev C Proposed Front Elevations, received 2 June 2025

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

171796 – Repairs to the front roof, removing all broken and unsafe existing tiles, making good all coverings and fitting a best match replacement tile. Application permitted.

152038/LBC – Listed Building Consent for the change of use from a laser clinic (Use Class D2) to a (Sui-Generis) mixed use of nurse practitioner and doctor led skin care beauty parlour treatments on ground floor, first and second floors with associated internal alterations including partitioning suspended ceilings and installation of an air conditioning unit and ducting. Application permitted

152037/ADV – Advertisement Consent for the installation of a front elevation halo illuminated fascia sign and a non-illuminated hanging sign. In addition a rear fascia halo illuminated sign and repainting of the existing front ground floor window. Application permitted

152036/FUL – Listed Building Consent for the change of use from a laser clinic (Use Class D2) to a (Sui-Generis) mixed use of nurse practitioner and doctor led skin care beauty parlour treatments on ground floor, first and second floors with associated internal alterations including partitioning suspended ceilings and installation of an air conditioning unit and ducting. Application permitted

1400590/LBC – Listed Building Consent for change of use from a mixed A1 and D1 use to C3 dwellinghouses in the form of 3 x 1-bed flats and associated cycle storage. Re-submissions of applications 131331 & 131332. Application permitted.

140589/FUL – Change of use from a mixed A1 and D1 use to C3 dwellinghouses in the form of 3 x 1-bed flats and associated cycle storage. Re-submissions of applications 131331 & 131332. Application permitted.

131331/FUL – Change of use of building from A1 and D1 use to C3 dwelling house to form 2x1 bed flats and 1x2 bed flat with internal alterations and associated car parking and cycle storage, including changes to fenestration. Application withdrawn.

131332/LBC – Change of use of building from A1 and D1 use to C3 dwelling house to form 2x1 bed flats and 1x2 bed flat with internal alterations and associated car parking and cycle storage, including changes to fenestration. Application withdrawn.

06/00076/FUL – Change of use from A2 to A1/D1 use as a laser clinic. Application permitted.

06/00077/LBC – Change of use from A2 to A1 (ground floor) /D1 (1st & 2nd floors) for use as a laser clinic. Application returned.

03/00938/FUL – Change of use from offices to dental surgery. Application withdrawn.

83/TP/0083 – Construction of part second floor office and toilet. Application permitted.

4. CONSULTATIONS

The following were consulted:

- RBC Conservation Officer – Amendments requested to relocate the proposed hanging sign and reduce the extent of proposed obscure film to the windows. No objections to the revised plans.
- Conservation Area Advisory Committee – No comments received.

Site notices were also erected on site for a period of 21 days from the 2nd of May 2025. No letters of representation were received.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority in the exercise of its functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the LPA to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.

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).

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.

National Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Practice Guidance

Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance 2008

HEAG125 Listed Buildings and Curtilage

HEAG304 Listed Building Consent

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC7: DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM

CC8: SAFEGUARDING AMENITY

EN1: PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

EN3: ENHANCEMENT OF CONSERVATION AREAS

OU4: ADVERTISEMENTS

OU5: SHOPFRONTS AND CASH MACHINES

Other documents

Design Guide to Shopfronts SPD 2022

Market Place/London Street Conservation Area Appraisal 2007

6. APPRAISAL

6.1. Heritage Implications

Policy EN1 requires proposals to protect and, where possible, enhance the significance of heritage assets and their settings, as well as the historic character and local distinctiveness of the area in which they are located.

The proposed advertisements are considered modest and sympathetic to the character of the building. Due to the nature of the proposed use of the site as a health clinic, obscure film is proposed to be applied to windows. This is reversible and does not pose a risk of harm to the significance of the building. In line with the Shopfronts SPD the applicant was asked to reduce the obscure film at the ground floor front elevation to half-height, and this is demonstrated on the revised drawings. This allows the site to maintain an active shopfront, while respecting the privacy of its users.

The proposed hanging sign replicates the design of the hanging sign, which was last in place around the 2010s, and although this is not reflective of the historic shopfront, it is not considered harmful to the character of the building nor the wider conservation area.

The removal of the fascia at the rear of the site presents an improvement to the buildings character in a highly visible location at the rear, as the existing fascia is oversized and unsympathetic to the surrounding area.

Overall, the proposal is considered acceptable and sympathetic to the site and its context, in line with policies EN1, EN3 and CC7 of the Reading Local Plan, and the Design Guide to Shopfronts SPD.

6.2. Public Safety

The NPPG (Paragraph: 068 Reference ID: 18b-068-20140306) provides guidance as to the considerations affecting public safety. These are outlined below:

(a) those which obstruct or impair sight-lines at corners, bends or at a junction, or at any point of access to a highway; **NO**

(b) those which, because of their size or siting, would obstruct or confuse a road-user's view, or reduce the clarity or effectiveness of a traffic sign or signal, or would be likely to distract road-users because of their unusual nature; **NO**

(c) those which effectively leave insufficient clearance above any part of a highway, or insufficient lateral clearance for vehicles on the carriageway (due allowance being made for the camber of the road-surface); **NO**

(d) those externally or internally illuminated signs (incorporating either flashing or static lights) including those utilising light emitting diode technology; **NO**

i. where the means of illumination is directly visible from any part of the road; **NO**

ii. which, because of their colour, could be mistaken for, or confused with, traffic lights or any other authorised signals; **NO**

iii. which, because of their size or brightness, could result in glare and dazzle, or distract road-users, particularly in misty or wet weather; or **NO**

iv. which are subject to frequent changes of the display; **NO**

(e) those which incorporate moving or apparently moving elements in their display, or successive individual advertisements which do not display the whole message; **NO**

(f) those requiring close study (such as Public Information Panels), which are situated so that people looking at them would be insufficiently protected from passing vehicles; or those advertisements sited on narrow footpaths where they may interfere with safe passage by causing pedestrians to step into the road; **NO**

(g) those which resemble traffic signs, as defined in section 64 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, and may therefore be subject to removal by the traffic authority under section 69 of that Act, for example:

*i. those embodying red circles, crosses or triangles, or any traffic sign symbol; or those in combinations of colours which might otherwise be mistaken for traffic signs; or **NO***

*ii. those incorporating large arrows or chevrons with only the arrow or chevron made of retroreflective material or illuminated, causing confusion with similar signs in use at, or approaching roundabouts. **NO***

*(h) those which embody directional or other traffic elements and which need special scrutiny because of possible resemblance to, or confusion with, traffic signs; for example, advertisements which: **NO***

*i. contain a large arrow or chevron (or have a pointed end and have only a few words of message); **NO***

*ii. invite drivers to turn right on a main road, or where there is fast moving traffic; **NO***

*iii. invite drivers to turn, but are sited so close to the turning that there is not enough time to signal and turn safely; or **NO***

*iv. are so close to similar advertisements, or official traffic signs, that road-users might be confused in the vicinity of a road junction or other traffic hazard. **NO***

In light of the above it is confirmed that the proposal not considered harmful to public safety

7. CONCLUSION

The proposals have been assessed in line with national and locally adopted policies as outlined above and are considered in accordance with those policies.

8. RECOMMENDATION

GRANT LISTED BUILDING CONSENT AND ADVERT CONSENT

Recommended Conditions (ADV):

1. Standard advert conditions
2. Approved Plans
3. Luminance limit

Recommended Conditions (LBC):

1. Time Limit (Standard)
2. Approved plans
3. Materials to match