

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Emmer Green Ward

App Ref: PL/25/0475 Consent to display an advertisement

Address: Emmer Green Drive, Kidmore End Road, Emmer Green, Reading , RG4 8SQ

Proposal: Boards, totem and parking tray signage together with external illumination

Applicant: Mrs Meghan Rossiter

Received date: 26/03/2025

Target Decision date: 21/05/2025

Case Officer: Matt Burns

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 The application site forms part of the former Reading Golf Club playing course on Kidmore End Road in Emmer Green.
- 1.2 Outline Planning Permission ref. 211843 was granted at the site on 31st March 2022, with matters reserved in respect of Appearance only, for demolition of the existing clubhouse and the erection of a new residential scheme (C3 use) to include affordable housing and public open space at the former reading golf club.
- 1.3 The lower southern part of the application site is bounded to the south by the rear boundary line of the playing fields at Emmer Green Primary School; and the road access to Lyfield Court and The Conifers a retirement complex of 2-storey accommodation; and the boundary of a large residential dwelling at The Brindles.
- 1.4 The upper northern part of the application site to the east and west is bounded respectively by the rear gardens of the two storey detached dwellings on Brooklyn Drive; and various styles of dwellings on Gorselands, Eric Avenue and Highdown Hill Road. Many of these dwelling plots contain gated access directly onto the Golf Course. The surrounding area within Reading Borough has a sylvan, low to medium density, suburban character.
- 1.5 The application site currently consists of extensive areas of open managed grassland with existing mature trees and hedgerows. Due to the extent of existing trees, of varying categories, the site is subject to an Area Tree Preservation Order (ref Area TPO 4/18) and TPO 96/02 which includes 23 individual trees and 9 groups of trees.
- 1.6 Kidmore End Road is a single carriageway local distributor road operating a speed limit of 30mph. A footway is provided on the western side of Kidmore End Road and is segregated from the main carriageway by means of a 2.5m-wide grass verge.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 Advertisement consent is sought for
 - 2 x externally illuminated board signs (0.9m x 0.6m)
 - 1 x externally illuminated totem sign (0.9m x 1.1m x 1.5m)
 - 1 x externally illuminated tray sign (1.8m x 0.5m x 0.06m)
 - 1 x non-illuminated tray sign (2.244m x 1.22m x 0.06m)
- 2.2 Plans and documents considered:

- Abri Emmer Green Drive Signage Planning Permission Pack – March 2025 – Pages 1 to 15

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 7th July 2025

- RPS Arboricultural Method Statement ref. 5423-RPS-XX-XX-RP-AR-91770 rev P03

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 4th July 2025

3. **CONSULTATIONS**

3.1 The following were consulted:

RBC Transport Development Control – No objection, subject to a condition to require that the maximum luminance of the advertisements does not exceed 300 cd/m2.

RBC Natural Environment – No objection, subject to a condition to require all the advertisements to be installed, maintained and removed in accordance with the submitted arboricultural method statement.

Public Consultation

3.2 1 x site notice was displayed at the site on 10th April 2025

3.3 No letters of representation have been received.

4. **PLANNING HISTORY**

4.1 211843OUT: Outline planning application, with matters reserved in respect of Appearance, for demolition of the existing clubhouse and the erection of a new residential scheme (C3 use to include affordable housing) and public open space at the former Reading Golf Club - Granted (linked to a S106).

4.2 221312VAR: Outline planning application with matters reserved in respect of Appearance for demolition of clubhouse and erection of a new residential scheme (c3 use) including affordable housing and public open space at former reading golf club without complying with conditions 5 (Plans), 8&9 (Emissions) 10&11 (SuDS), 12 (Levels), 13 (Mix), 17 (AMS), 19 (Habitat Enhancement), 20 (CEMP), 22 (Biodiversity), 25&26 (Contamination), 29 (CMS), 34 (Cycle Parking), 35 (Refuse), 39 (Car Parking), 41 (Traffic Calming) & 44 (Archaeology) of outline permission 211843 for amendments including changes to layout, mix, parking, drainage, landscaping, open space and energy. Resolved to approve at Planning Applications Committee on 29th March 2023 – Granted.

4.3 220930REM: Application for approval of reserved matters (appearance) submitted pursuant to outline planning application ref. 221312/VAR. Resolved to approved at Planning Applications Committee on 29th March 2023 – Granted

4.4 230171ADV: 2 no. 'Company Branding' Flagpoles, 1 no. 'Welcome Sign V-Board' ACM on Aluminium Posts - Granted (temporary permission).

4.5 240447ADV: 1 x Entrance Monolith Sign, 2 x Customer Parking Monolith Signs, 1 x ACM Panel (installed on close board fencing), 1 x Abri Homes Monolith Sign, 1 x Customer Parking Directional Sign, 5 x Banner Flags, 1 x 'The Birch' Monolith Sign, 1 x Sales Centre Tray Sign, 1 x Show Home Acrylic Sign, 2 x Railing Banners, 1 x Stake Sign, 2 x V-Board Signs and 1 x 'The Primrose' Tray Sign (all non-illuminated) – Granted (temporary permission).

5 LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 5.1 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'. The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:
- 5.2 National Policy and Guidance
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
- 5.3 Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)
CC7: DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM
CC8: SAFEGUARDING AMENITY
EN14: TREES, HEDGES AND WOODLAND
TR3: ACCESS, TRAFFIC AND HIGHWAY-RELATED MATTERS
OU4: ADVERTISEMENTS
- 5.4 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
- 5.4 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 APPRAISAL

- 6.1 The NPPG (Paragraph: 079 Reference ID: 18b-079-20140306) provides clarification as to the exact context amenity should be considered (in short, it includes aural and visual amenity and factors relevant to amenity include the general characteristics of the locality, including the presence of any feature of historic, architectural, cultural or similar interest). Furthermore, at the local level, policies CC7 and OU4 require that development be compatible with the character and appearance of the surrounding environment in order to maintain the visual amenities of the area. In particular, policy OU4 states:

“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, and will not have a detrimental effect on public safety. The cumulative impact of adverts will be taken into account, and a proliferation of advertisements that detrimentally affects visual or aural amenity or public safety will not be acceptable”.

Amenity Matters

- 6.2 All the advertisements proposed are marketing advertisements associated with the residential development that is under construction at the former Reading Golf Club site. By their nature the advertisements would be temporary with the application form stating that advertisement consent is sought until 29th February 2028.
- 6.3 All the advertisements proposed would be set within the development site, away from the edges of the development and as such would not be readily visible from Kidmore End Road, which is the main existing public thoroughfare that abuts the application site, nor from existing residential dwellings surrounding the site.
- 6.4 The most prominent advertisement proposed is the 1.5m high totem sign located on the north side of Emmer Green Drive, which runs through the development site and provides access from Kidmore End Road, on a grass verge near plot 211. The totem sign would have an aluminium structure and would predominantly display white text on a dark blue background and would provide direction to one of the show homes within the development. The totem sign would be visible from views either way along Emmer Green Drive but would sit well below the height of adjacent street lighting poles and retained mature trees within the development site and as such are not considered to appear unduly prominent in the context of the surroundings while the modest external illumination provided by small ground set solar powered uplighters is not considered to result in any significant harm to surrounding visual amenity.
- 6.5 Two smaller externally illuminated board signs of a similar style, colour scheme and method of illumination with a height of 0.6m are located further to the east along Emmer Green Drive. A similar and further externally illuminated lower level (0.5m in height) tray sign and a non-illuminated tray sign are also proposed on either side of Emmer Green Drive providing information about the new show home and parking arrangements. The modest scale of these advertisements is such that they are not considered to result in any significant harm to surrounding visual amenity.
- 6.6 A number of the proposed signs are located within close proximity to a number of retained trees within the development. All trees on the former golf club site are subject to area TPO's (ref. TPO 4/18 and TPO 96/02). An arboricultural method statement has been submitted with the application to demonstrate how the signs will be installed and removed without resulting in significant harm to relevant trees. The arboricultural method statement has been revised by the RBC Natural Environment Officer who is satisfied that it has been prepared to an appropriate standard and if followed would ensure a suitable level of protection for impacted trees on the site. A condition is recommended to be attached to the advertisement consent to ensure installation and removal of the signs is carried out only in accordance with the approved method statement.
- 6.7 It is noted that a number of other temporary marketing advertisements are already in place at the site having been granted (on a temporary basis) under advertisements consent refs 23/0171 and 24/0447). These existing signs are located elsewhere within the site towards the Kidmore End Road frontage and to the south side of Emmer Green Drive and the proposed signs are not considered to result in unacceptable proliferation of advertisements. Furthermore, the proposed marketing advertisements are typical of those proposed around similar development sites and notably they would not be a permanent feature given they relate to construction and marketing phase of the development. Given temporary consent is sought a condition is recommended to require the advertisements to be removed on the specified date. The advertisements would also be required to be removed to allow the developer to comply with the landscaping and other requirements of the development.

Public Safety

6.8 ii. The NPPG (in particular in this instance Paragraph: 068 Reference ID: 18b-068-20140306 & Paragraph: 078 Reference ID: 18b-078-20140306) provides guidance as to the considerations affecting public safety. These are detailed below, together with officer responses in relation to the proposal (in bold):

iii. The main types of advertisement which may cause danger to road users are:

(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:

i. where the means of illumination is directly visible from any part of the road;

ii. which, because of their colour, could be mistaken for, or confused with, traffic lights or any other authorised signals;

iii. which, because of their size or brightness, could result in glare and dazzle, or distract road-users, particularly in misty or wet weather;

iv. which are subject to frequent changes of the display;

All but one of the proposed advertisements would be externally illuminated by ground based solar powered uplighters. The lighting specification submitted sets out that the lights would have a luminance level of 200 cd/m2. RBC Transport Officers have reviewed the proposed siting of the advertisements and level of illumination and are satisfied that signs would not result in excessive glare or result in danger to highway users.

(e) those which incorporate moving or apparently moving elements in their display, or successive individual advertisements which do not display the whole message; **N/A**

(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; **No** or

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:

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; **No** or
- v. 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**
- vi. The prevention of crime is a public safety consideration and local planning authorities should consider whether granting express consent could block the view of CCTV cameras, or whether illumination from an advertisement would cause glare on such cameras. **No**

- 6.9 The RBC Transport Officer raise no objections to the proposed advertisements and in light of the above it is confirmed that the proposals are considered to be satisfactory on public safety grounds, subject to a condition to requires that the illumination of the advertisements does not exceed 300 cd/m2.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 Having regard to the material considerations relevant planning policies as set out above, the Local Planning Authority considers that the balance of considerations therefore weighs in favour of granting advertisement consent subject to conditions.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT advertisement consent subject to 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 advertisements hereby consented shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

- Abri Emmer Green Drive Signage Planning Permission Pack – March 2025 – Pages 1 to 15

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 7th July 2025

- RPS Arboricultural Method Statement ref. 5423-RPS-XX-XX-RP-AR-91770 rev P03

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 4th July 2025

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the advertisement is carried out in accordance the details hereby approved in accordance with Policy OU4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

3. The advertisements hereby permitted shall be removed no later than 29th February 2028.

REASON: To ensure the advertisements are removed in a timely manner in accordance with the anticipated constriction timeframe of the development given their siting would not be appropriate in terms of visual amenity impacts once the proposed new dwellings are complete and occupied in accordance with Policies OU4 and CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

4. The advertisements hereby consented shall not be installed or removed other than in strict accordance with the protective measures, including fencing, ground protection, supervision and working procedures set out within the RPS Arboricultural Method Statement ref. 5423-RPS-XX-XX-RP-AR-91770 P03 dated 3 July 2025 and received by the Local Planning Authority on 4th July 2025.

REASON: In order to protect trees existing trees within the site, in the interests of the visual amenities of the locality in accordance with Policy EN14 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

5. The maximum luminance of advertisements hereby consented shall not exceed 300 cd/m².

REASON: To protect the visual amenity and avoid excessive glare that could lead to a danger to highway users in accordance with Policy CC7 and OU4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.