

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT FOR CONSENT TO DISPLAY AN ADVERTISEMENT

App Ref: PL/25/0774

Ward: Abbey Ward

Address: 19 DUKE STREET, READING, RG1 4SA

Proposals: Three number new powder coated fascia with vinyl lettering fixed via metal 'L' angles to existing timber fascia. One number projecting signage, powder coated fascia with inset letters.

Case Officer: Mishga Marshall

Date received (valid from): 27/05/2025

Target Decision date: 22/07/2025

EOT Agreed Decision date: 29/07/2025

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site comprises a commercial premises located on the eastern side of Duke Street, within Reading town centre. The property is situated within a primary shopping frontage and lies within the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area. The surrounding area is predominantly commercial in character with a variety of retail and service uses at ground floor level. The building forms part of a terrace of traditional properties of historic character and significance, contributing to the Conservation Area's visual amenity.

PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The application seeks advertisement consent for:

Three fascia signs: Powder coated fascias with vinyl lettering, to be fixed via metal 'L' angles onto the existing timber fascia.

One projecting sign: A powder coated fascia with inset lettering.

The signage is proposed to be non-illuminated and use burgundy and cream colours.

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS

- Boundary of Reading Central Area
- Air Quality Management Area
- Primary Shopping Area
- Central Core
- Conservation area: Market Place/London Street
- Listed buildings nearby - High Bridge, 1 London Street, 2&4 London Street
- Area of archaeological potential

SITE VISIT

Site visit date: 08/07/2025

PLANS AND DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED RECIEVED [23/05/2025]

- Eclectic Games_B_Planning-000_BLOCK PLAN
- Eclectic Games_B_Planning-003_EXISTING SHOPFRONT_A
- Eclectic Games_B_Planning-300_PROPOSED SHOPFRONT_A

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

N/A

CONSULTATION

Internal & External Consultations:

RBC Transport: No Objection but 600cd/m² max luminance condition advised.

RBC CCTV: No Comment.

Thames Valley CCTV: No Comment.

Thames Valley Police: No Comment.

Heritage: No overall objection, asked for clarity on whether there was any external lighting proposed for use. [Officer Comment: the applicant has clarified that there would be no lighting to the signage, all the signage is non illuminated with no overhanging lights either]

Conservation Area Advisory Committee: No Comment.

No neighbour notifications were undertaken as part of these applications and no comments have been received.

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'.

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.

The following local and national planning policies and guidance are relevant to this application:

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework 2024

Reading Borough Local Plan 2019

CC7: Design and the Public Realm

EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

EN3: Enhancement of Conservation Areas

OU4: Advertisements

TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters

OFFICER ASSESSMENT:

Design Considerations

Policy OU4 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, 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.

The proposed fascia signs are modest in scale and would be fixed onto the existing timber fascia, retaining the traditional shopfront proportions. The powder coated finish and vinyl lettering provide a clean and contemporary appearance that is not considered to harmfully detract from the character of the host building, street scene or wider Conservation Area. The proposed signage respects the architectural integrity of the façade and does not result in visual clutter.

Overall, the signage is considered to preserve the visual amenity of the area and enhance the vibrancy of the town centre.

The Conservation officer has raised no objection to the proposals, and it is not considered that they would be materially harmful to the setting of nearby listed buildings.

Given the above, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in design terms in accordance with Policies CC7, EN3 and OU4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Public Safety

Whilst visible, the fascia signage is not considered to cause obstruction or distraction to road/footway/cycle users. The signage is positioned above head height and does not obstruct the public highway. The signs are not internally or externally illuminated and would not result in any glare or distraction to highway users or pedestrians. The proposal therefore does not pose a risk to public safety.

As such the proposal is considered to be acceptable in public safety terms in accordance with Policy TR3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

RECOMMENDATION

The development has been assessed, and the works are considered to be in accordance with the above relevant policies and Advertisement Consent can be granted.