



D&M PLANNING ^{Ltd}
Chartered Town Planners

1A High Street, Godalming Surrey GU7 1AZ | 01483425705 | info@dm-planning.co.uk
www.dm-planning.co.uk

PLANNING STATEMENT

For

**ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT FOR INSTALLATION OF TWO FREESTANDING
ADVERTISEMENTS**

At

SIGNATURE CARE HOME, 2 WILLOW VIEW, CAVERSHAM, READING RG4 6LB

**D&M REF:/26/MS
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DIRECTORS - ANDREW BANDOSZ BA (Hons) MSc Dip UP! MRTPI
SENIOR ASSOCIATE - MATT SMITH BA (Hons) MA MRTPI **ASSOCIATE** - CHRIS FRENCH BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI
PLANNER - PAUL HARDWICK BSc (Hons) MRTPI

CONTENTS:

- 1. Introduction and Summary**
- 2. Description of Site and Locality**
- 3. Planning History**
- 4. The Proposal**
- 5. Planning Policy and Guidance Background**
- 6. Planning Considerations**
- 7. Conclusion**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning statement is submitted on behalf of our client, the applicant, in support of an application for advertisement consent for the installation of two signs at Signature Care Home, 2 Willow View, Caversham, RG4 6LB.
- 1.2 The application site, as shown on the site plan below, is located to the south of Henley Road to the west of Willow View and consists of a purpose-built care home providing dedicated care facilities.



Proposed Location Plan

- 1.3 The site consists of a detached care home with dedicated access and roadway. The site is set down below the highway and provides existing care provision. There are a number of adverts within the site with the proposal seeking to replace existing ones as part of the Care Home's rebrand.
- 1.4 The site is located within the developed area wherein the principle of development including advertisements is acceptable subject to the consideration of how the impact of the advertisement on the character and amenity of the area.
- 1.5 The proposed signage would be freestanding replacing the existing in the same location to the west of the entrance way.

- 1.6 The proposed advertisement would be 3.6m wide with a trough light above to provide modest illumination. It would be raised above the ground so as to project above the existing fence line.
- 1.7 The proposed application would not change the use of the land or the wider character of the area retaining the use of the site as a dedicated care home.
- 1.8 This statement covers the site description, the proposal, the principle of development and contextual assessment. It will also demonstrate how the proposal accords with the relevant policies of the Local Plan and policies contained within the NPPG.
- 1.9 It is contended that this proposal fully accords with all of the relevant local plan policies, guidance within the NPPF and various supporting documents. Accordingly, it is contended that permission should be granted.

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND LOCALITY

- 2.1 The site, as shown on the plan below, is located to the south of Henley Road and to the west of Willow View.



Proposed Location Plan

- 2.2 The land consists of a detached purpose-built care home located within a large site area.
- 2.3 The site is located within a predominately residential area backing onto fields.
- 2.4 The building is built into the steep topography of the land resulting in elements of varying height and form. The land drops significantly away to the south meaning the site entrance onto Henley Road is set much higher than the entrance to the care home.
- 2.5 There are existing advertisements fronting Henley Road which provide a welcome and directional signage for the care home. Some of these would be replaced as part of the proposal.
- 2.6 The site is located within the defined settlement area.

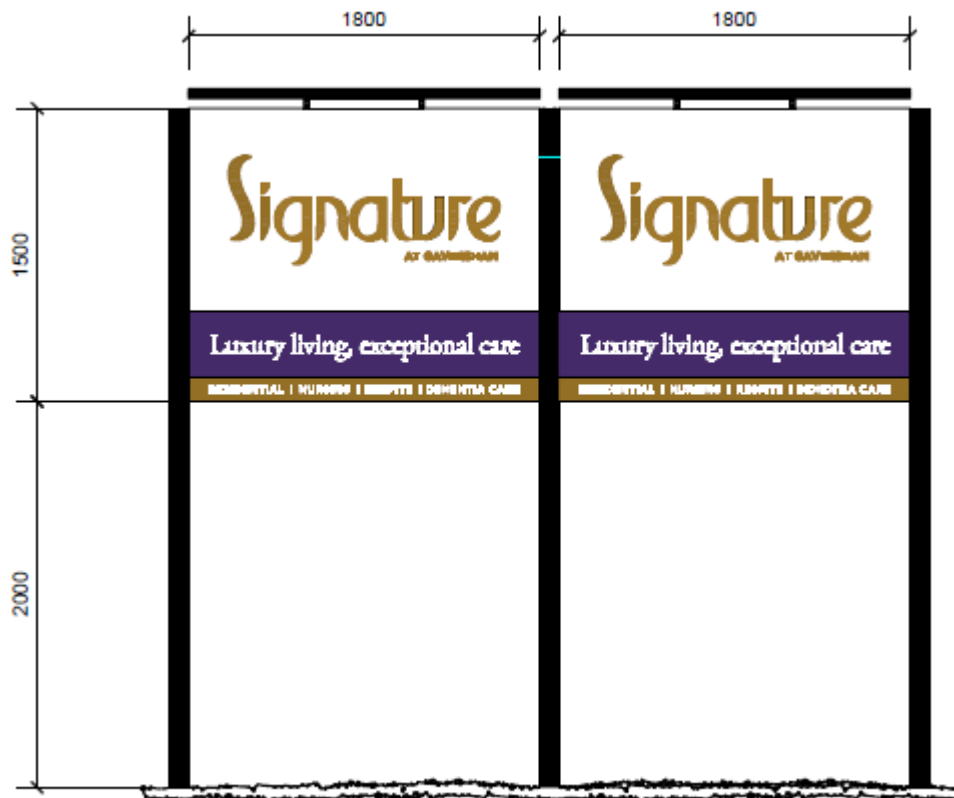
3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 The planning history for the site is shown in the table below:

Ref;	Description;	Decision;
PL/19/0835	Demolition of 199-203 Henley Road and erection of part four, part three and part two storey 82 unit residential care home building (C2 use class) with associated external structures, access from Henley Road, car parking and landscaping	Permitted 2019

4.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1 The application seeks advertisement consent for the installation of two freestanding signs.
- 4.2 The proposal is outlined in detail by way of the proposed and existing plans, however, a description of such is set out below.
- 4.3 The signage consists of two freestanding structures with trough light above. The freestanding signs consists of advertisements measuring 1.8m x 1.5m each. The signs would be raised above the ground with a height of circa 3.5m to accommodate the topographical differences between the road and the land.



5.0 PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE BACKGROUND

- 5.1 For the purposes of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, planning applications are required to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.2 The approved Development Plan for this site therefore comprises the policies of the Reading Borough Local Plan adopted in 2019.
- 5.3 There is no neighbourhood plan for the area.

Planning Policy Constraints

- 5.4 The application site is subject to the following planning constraints:
- Developed Area
 - Air Quality Management Area

Central Government Planning Policy Guidance

- 5.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was first introduced in March 2012 and replaced planning policy statements (PPSs) and planning policy guidance notes (PPGs). The NPPF sets out national planning policy to be taken into account by Councils when preparing new local plans and when taking decisions on planning applications.
- 5.6 The NPPF has recently been updated with a revised version being published in December 2024. There continues to be a strong presumption in favour of sustainable development and at paragraph 3 it advises the Framework should be read as a whole.
- 5.7 Paragraph 7 states the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 states achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives (economic, social and environmental), which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different

objectives). However, paragraph 9 states these are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Decisions should also take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.

5.8 Paragraph 12 states the following:

'The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan...permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.'

5.9 The most relevant sections of the NPPF in relation to this proposal are 4 (Decision Making); and 12 (Achieving well-designed places).

5.10 Section 4 of the NPPF sets out how decisions should be made recognizing that schemes which are in accordance with the development plan should be approved without delay. We contend the proposal to be wholly in accordance with the development plan and there should be no delay to the granting of permission.

5.11 Section 12 deals with the requirement for good design, which it notes is a key aspect of sustainable development. Critically paragraph 141 states:

The quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed. A separate consent process within the planning system controls the display of advertisements, which should be operated in a way which is simple, efficient and effective. Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts.

Local Development Plan

- 5.12 The approved Development Plan for this site therefore comprises the policies of the Reading Local Plan 2019
- 5.13 The following policies of the Development Plan are considered to apply to this application:
- CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
 - CC7: Design and the Public Realm
 - CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
 - OU4: Advertisement
- 5.14 The following planning documents may also be relevant and taken into consideration:
- NPPG

6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The application seeks advertisement consent for the installation of two freestanding signs with trough lighting.
- 6.2 Having had regard to the planning constraints of the land it is considered that the key determining factors will be:
- Principle of Development
 - Design and Visual Impact
 - Impact on Amenity of the Area
 - Impact on Highways
 - Other Matters

Principle of Development

- 6.3 The site is located within the developed area wherein the principle of advertisements being erected is considered acceptable. This is to say that it is not located within an area of advertisement control or within any landscape or any constraint of limitation.
- 6.4 The suitability of the advertisement is therefore based on the requirements of Section 12 of the NPPF. Specifically, this requires a consideration of the impact of the advertisement on the character of the area.
- 6.5 Further to this, the proposed advertisement would replace the existing which in turn serve the existing care home. It is not a location whereby advertisements would not be expected nor anticipated.
- 6.6 Policy OU4 of the Reading Development Plan is directly relevant to the determination of the application. It 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. All adverts shall comply with the following criteria:

- a) Advertisements will not obstruct windows, any other sign already located on the building, or cut across significant architectural features such as historic fascias, windows, pilasters, cornices or scrolls;*
- b) Where a shop or business occupies more than one adjacent unit, the advertisement will not run between the shopfronts;*
- c) Advertisements on listed buildings or in Conservation Areas will respect or enhance the building or area, and will respect the key features of the special historic interest;*
- d) Advertisements will not reduce visibility for users of the highway or accesses onto the highway;*
- e) Illumination should not detract from the amenity of the area or pose a safety hazard to users of the highway; and*
- f) Advertisements should not obscure the sight lines of cameras installed for public safety.*

- 6.7 Reference will be given to Policy OU4 as well as other relevant policies under the sub-headers below.

Design and Visual Impact

- 6.8 As per the NPPF, in considering whether to grant advertisement consent the principal consideration is with regard to the impact of the proposal on the character of the area noting that poorly sited or designed advertisements can be detrimental to the character of the area.

- 6.9 This is reflected in Policy OU4 which requires advertisements to have regard to the character of the area. Although relevant to proposed development Policy CC7 of the Development Plan provides a policy framework for the assessment of proposal on the character of an area. It states that development should be of a high quality requiring it to

Respond positively to their local context and create or reinforce local character and distinctiveness, including protecting and enhancing the historic environment of the Borough and providing value to the public realm;

- 6.10 The proposed advertisements would replace the existing ones in situ and be positioned in the same place. They would reflect the rebranding of the care home operator, Signature.
- 6.11 Given the similarities with the existing advertisements it is considered that the principle of replacement signage in this location and form is acceptable and would not result in any detrimental impacts to the character of the area compared to the existing.
- 6.12 The size of the signage is appropriate for the setting and the context of the area. The boards would provide a clearly visible direction for the care home making it easier to locate within the vicinity.
- 6.13 The layout and position of the signage take into account the topography of the site and would be positioned behind the existing fence line limiting its form in the context of the area.
- 6.14 Having regard to such we consider that the proposed form, size, positioning and layout would be wholly appropriate to the context of the area. To this extent we contend that the proposal would accord with the development plan and NPPF in this regard.

Impact on Amenity of Area

- 6.15 As set out above both the NPPF and Policy OU4 require consideration to be given to the impact of advertisements on the amenity of the area.
- 6.16 The surrounding area is predominately residential in character and the proposed signage, in this instance, has the potential to result in harm to the amenity of such properties, as well as the amenities of pedestrians, by way of harm caused by overbearing impact, loss of light, or through light intrusion.
- 6.17 Whilst this is the case, having regard to the siting of the proposed advertisement and the considerable separation distances to neighbouring properties it is not envisaged that the structure itself would result in harm by way of its built form. This is to say there would be no adverse loss of light, nor overbearing impact to the amenity of residents.
- 6.18 Further in this regard, given that the advertisement would be set behind the existing fence line and replace existing signage there would be no adverse impacts to the amenity of the public realm.
- 6.19 The proposed signage would include trough lighting which would direct the light towards the sign itself. The result of such is that there would be very limited light spill and therefore not likely result in any adverse impacts by reason of light pollution. Further, should the Council have concerns then conditions on the degree of illumination could be attached to any consent.
- 6.20 It is our conclusion that having regard to the above the proposed advertisements would not result in harm to the amenity of the surrounding area.

Impact on Highways

- 6.21 As set out both National and Local Policy seeks to ensure that advertisements do not result in harm to the safety and amenity of the highway.

- 6.22 In the consideration of the application on site for the erection of the care home in 2019, the application was accompanied by a transport statement. This statement included site visibility splays and plans of areas which needed to be kept clear to ensure safe access and egress from the site.
- 6.23 The proposed signage would be positioned behind these splays to the extent that they would not interfere with the visibility shown on those plans. To this extent we contend they would not result in harm to highway safety by virtue of the proposed siting or design.
- 6.24 As mentioned above the proposed trough lighting would be limited in focus towards the sign reducing any light spill. This in combination with its position on the site and signage would prevent it from being visually intrusive or distracting to highway users.
- 6.25 Having compared to the visibility splay and the location of the proposed signage it is contended that the advertisement would not detract from the safe function of the highway.

Other Matters

- 6.27 The proposed signage would be sited in relation to the existing and lawful use of the building and would serve as directional/instruction signage as a way finder. There would be no associated operational development or material change of use.
- 6.28 The signage would be installed in such a manner that did not result in any impacts on the arboricultural or ecological interest of the land.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The application seeks advertisement consent for the installation of signage to replace existing as part of the care home operators rebranding exercising.
- 7.2 The proposed signage would be appropriate to the context of the area and would not detract from the areas wider character of form.
- 7.3 The advertisement would not result in harm to the amenity of the highway nor to neighbouring properties.
- 7.4 This statement has demonstrated how the proposal accords with the relevant policies of the local plan and national policy contained within the NPPF. Having had regard to such we respectfully request that the application for advertisement consent be issued.
- 7.5 We trust we have provided officers with sufficient information to determine the application, however, should further be required please do not hesitate to ask.

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