

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Kentwood Ward

App Ref: PL/26/0292 Consent to display an advertisement

Address: Pods, Scours Lane, Tilehurst, Reading, RG30 6AX

Proposal: Advertisement consent for a Free Standing Totem Pole

Applicant: Mr N Harrison

Received date: 04/03/2026

Target Decision date: Originally 8/05/2026; EOT agreed until 22/05/2026

Case Officer: Catrin Davies

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site relates to an area of grassland located on the south east side of Scours Lane, opposite the junction with Oxford Road, near Norcot Roundabout. There is a change in site levels and the site slopes up from the north to the south of the site.

The surrounding area to the north and west is predominantly comprised of the industrial and commercial units of Stadium Way. The area to the south is predominantly residential, with shops nearby on the opposite (south) side of the Norcot Roundabout. The River Thames is to the north of the site, beyond the railway line.

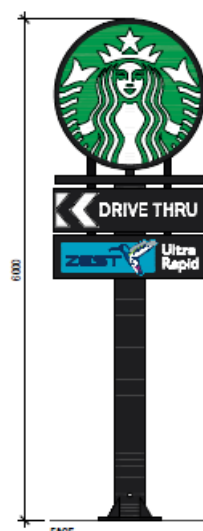
The site is located within the Portman Road Core Employment Area (EM2h) as well as within an Air Quality Management Area.

There are 3 trees on the site which are protected by a Tree Preservation Order (reference 30/10). Scours Lane is a designated Green Link and Oxford Road a treed corridor, which these trees, and others on the site, form part of.

The rearmost part of the site, to the north, is within Flood Zones 2 and 3 as designated by the Environment Agency.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The application seeks advertisement consent for a free standing Totem Pole.



Proposed elevation

Plans:

- 2889-URB-ZZ-00-DR-A-208101 P00- SITE BLOCK PLAN AS EXISTING received 4 Mar 2026 (Location Plan)
- 2889-URB-TO-ZZ-DR-A-208251 P10a- ELEVATIONS AS PROPOSED received 4 Mar 2026
- Scours Lane Reading Totem Illumination received 28 Apr 2026
- QD784-300-Rev F-Landscape General Arrangement-2026-05-13 received 13/5/26

The application has been amended since submission the location of the totem pole being relocated closer to the approved building for PL/24/0852.

Planning History:

PL/24/0852- Proposed development a Drive-Through restaurant (Use Class E (a,b) and Sui Generis Hot Food Take Away, Car Parking, enhanced landscaping and Access Arrangements. Variation of Conditions 9 and 10 (BREEAM) of application 220637. Granted subject to conditions

PL/26/0335- Section 73 application to vary Condition 2 (Drawings) of planning application PL/24/0852 "Proposed development a Drive-Through restaurant (Use Class E (a,b) and Sui Generis Hot Food Take Away, Car Parking, enhanced landscaping and Access Arrangements. Variation of Conditions 9 and 10 (BREEAM) of application 220637" (to amend the layout, hard and soft landscaping and elevational details and include EV Charging units)". Under Consultation.

3. CONSULTATIONS

The following were consulted:

Transport Development Control

This application is for an illuminated Totem Sign displaying the Starbucks branding.

There are no transport objections to this application subject to the condition below regarding luminance levels.

AD1 ADVERT LUMINANCE

The maximum luminance of advertisements displayed should not exceed 600 cd/m² above ambient light levels.

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.

Environment Protection

No objection subject to condition of opening hour

Public Consultation

A site notice was displayed at the application site and no neighbour letters of representation received.

4. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

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.

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.

5. APPRAISAL

Advertisements may only be controlled with regard to two material considerations:

- **Amenity** –The effect of advertisement(s) on the appearance of buildings or the immediate vicinity of where they are displayed, including the character and appearance of the conservation area, the setting of Listed Buildings, and impact on non-designated heritage assets such as locally listed buildings
- **Public safety** – matters having a bearing on the safe use and operation of any form of traffic or transport, including the safety of pedestrians, or distraction of drivers or confusion with traffic signs.

The NPPF advises that poorly placed advertisements can have a negative impact on the appearance of the built and natural environment, and that advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts.

Policy OU4 state “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

The application site relates to an existing grassland; however, the site has gained planning permission (through appeal) to develop the site into a drive-Through restaurant (Use Class E (a,b) and Sui Generis hot food take away and car parking, the proposed advertisement is therefore intend to relate to the approved development. Given the site has got permission to be redeveloped and would introduce a commercial use onto the grassland the proposed advertisement consent would not be out of character. The application is for a single sign to ensure there is not an over cluttering at the site and is at a suitable size. The proposed signage is visually acceptable given the extant consent at the site and in keeping with the surrounding area.

The proposed totem sign is located within an area of approved soft landscaping. However, it is considered that there is sufficient space for tree planting to be provided which could change the currently indicative location of tree planting - and the specifics of this will be dealt with through the discharge of condition application relating to landscaping which are yet to be discharged.

Regarding neighbouring amenities, there are no residential development adjacent to the application site but there are several dwellings on the opposite side of the road to the application site along Oxford Road with an approx. separation distance of 40m. The proposed advertisement is modest in size and would not be overbearing. There will be no over-cluttering of the site in regard to scale, light-source or materials. The proposed signage is of a limited, fixed illumination, and is sited appropriately to ensure no adverse impact on neighbouring amenity. A condition will be imposed controlling the illumination level to ensure it complies with CC7 and OU4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019

Public Safety

Whilst clearly visible, the proposed sign is not considered to cause obstruction or distraction to road/footway/cycle users. Transport Officers have raised no objection to the proposals subject to a condition controlling luminance levels for ongoing 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.

6. CONCLUSION

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. The signage is not considered to have a detrimental impact on amenity or public safety.