

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Abbey Ward

App Ref: PL/26/0734 Consent to display an advertisement

Address: 95 BROAD STREET, READING, RG1 2AP

Proposal: "Blue Banana" shop fascia - white powder coated tray with black stand-off letters

Applicant: Blue Banana Karl Wilby

Received date: 04/06/2026

Target Decision date: 30/07/2026

Case Officer: Ethne Humphreys

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application relates to a Grade II Listed Building located on the south side of Broad Street, close to the junction with Chain Street. The site is located within the Reading Central Area, the Primary Shopping Area and is an 'Active Frontage'.

The listing description reads:

"BROAD STREET 1. 5128 (South Side) No 95 SU 7173 SW 2/414 II 2. Probably C17 or early C18 in origin. Altered C20. Rendered brick front. Tiled roof with 3 close set ridges. 2 windows on 2nd floor with segmental headed late C19 surrounds and window on 1st floor and modern shop front."

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The proposal seeks advertisement consent for fascia signage. The material for the signage is white aluminium with black lettering.

No separate application for Listed Building Consent has been submitted.

It is noted that a fascia sign has been erected without advertisement consent or listed building consent.

Plans Considered:

Location Plan

Block Plan TQRQM25216133842052

Blue Banana Reading SHOP FRONT BB 207-01 14/04/26

Blue Banana Reading Genral Layout BB 207-01 15/07/24

Received 4th June 2026

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

25/1099 Display Fascia signage internally illuminated. Refused.

4. CONSULTATIONS

- Conservation Officer: Object, due to lack of information, material and design.
- Transport Officer: Comments received under application 25/1099 – no objection subject to condition restricting luminance
- CCTV: Comments received under application 25/1099 - concern projecting sign would hinder sight of a camera located in direct line of sight in close proximity. **Officer comment:** *No projecting sign proposed under this application.*

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. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

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.

Accordingly, the National Planning Policy Framework and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant:

National Planning Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework 2024

National Planning Practice Guidance 2014 onwards

Historic England Good Practice Guide Note Number 2: managing significance in decision-taking

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

Policy CC7 – Design and the Public Realm

Policy CC8 – Safeguarding Amenity

Policy EN1 – Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

Policy TR3 – Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters

Policy OU4 – Advertisements

Policy OU5 - Shopfronts

Design Guide for Shopfronts SPD (2022)

6. APPRAISAL

Design and Impact on Heritage Assets

The submitted drawings are not sufficiently detailed and this hinders the assessment of the application, especially given the importance of understanding the effect on the character of the listed building. The following assessment is based on the limited information provided.

95 Broad Street is a Grade II Listed Building. Listed Building Consent is therefore required for the signage which is affixed to the ground floor shop front of this property. No such application has been received, despite advising the applicant on several occasions that this was required - 9th October 2025 under application 25/1099 (see history above) and 27th March 2026 and 10th April 2026, following opening of Enforcement case.

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.

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 Policy further states that advertisements on listed buildings or in conservation areas will respect or enhance the building or area, and they will respect the key features of the historic asset.

Paragraph 141 of the NPPF details that the quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed.

Paragraph 212 of the NPPF details that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be).

The Design Guide to Shopfronts SPD (2022) states that *"Modern shopfront designs and materials are often inappropriate as part of a historic building or within a conservation area where they detract from the character or appearance the area is designed to protect"* (Para 4.4).

As above, a fascia sign has been erected without advertisement consent or listed building consent. This sign is therefore unauthorised. It is noted that the sign erected is not the same as that applied for under this application (which is not accompanied by listed building consent application).

This appraisal relates to the signage proposed under this application.

This application follows refusal of application 25/1099 and has been submitted as result of an Enforcement case.

It is noted that in an email 9th April 2026 from the applicant to the Enforcement team the applicant queries *"I have also been searching through the Historic England's listed building data base and it seem odd that 95 is listed as grade 2 whereas 94 and 96 are not. And in all reality the adjacent property no.96 looks far more likely a grade 2 listed building. Has there maybe been a mistake with this listing?"*

The official 1978 listing for the building includes 'modern shop front'. Historic photographs of the site (shown below) suggest that the original shopfront was replaced many years ago, before the listing.

Original shop front 1903



Altered shop front 1962



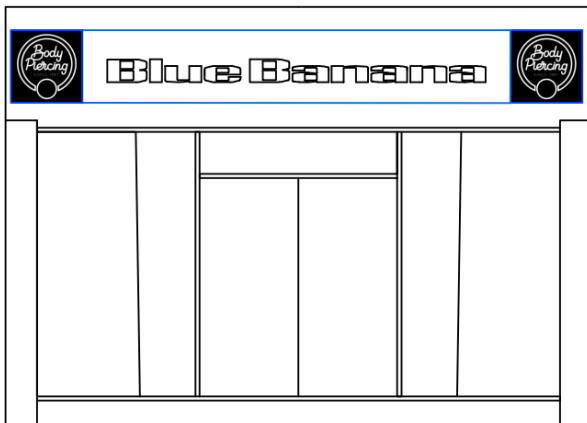
Altered shop front 1980s



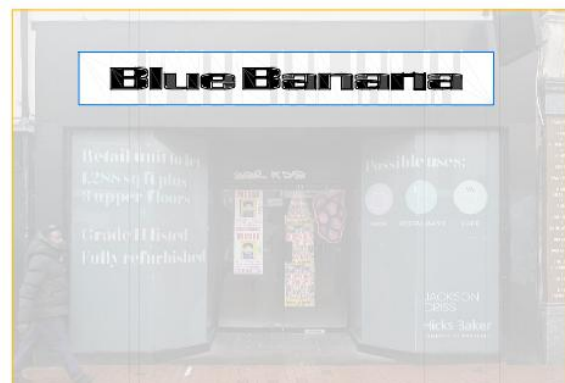
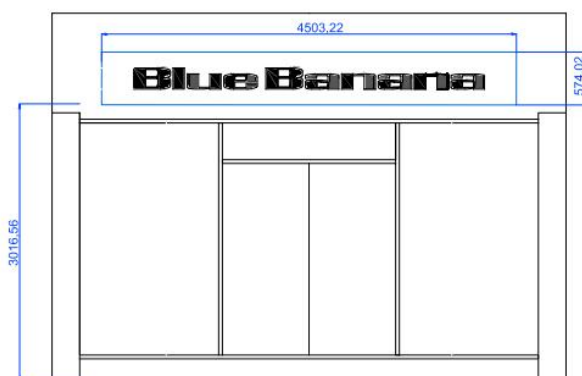
Given the above, a more modern shopfront is not unacceptable in principle, and as noted under application 25/1099.

The changes since application 25/1099 are noted, which include removal of the logo either side of the 'Blue Banana' and confirmation no projecting sign.

Proposed (Refused) Signage 25/1099



Current Proposed Signage



However, the proposed signage remains inappropriate for a listed building. The applicant was advised 9th October 2025 that timber should be the main material for the signage. An aluminium tray remains proposed. The applicant, in an email 14th April 2026 stated that *"I have consulted with Blue banana and we truly believe that the Blue banana company logo, being black letter on a white background, is something that the directors don't want to compromise on, And in my opinion painting a timber panel white will not look good - White always shows any surface faults and ply wood panels are never perfectly flat. It will deteriorate and discolour much quicker than the white di-bond board."* This is not considered appropriate justification for inappropriate material to be used.

There are a range of fascia panels and fascia lettering within the street scene. However, the majority feature timber panelling, a slim profile and external illumination. Indeed, the previous more recent signage on the site featured smaller lettering, with lighting installed externally and on a timber fascia:



Timber would be a more appropriate material, but this is not proposed. Furthermore, external lighting that is sympathetic to the listed building could be appropriate. This is not proposed. The application form has been left blank in respect of illumination detail ie it has not answered the question as to whether it will be illuminated either externally or internally. Neither have the proposed plans been annotated to stipulate. Application 25/1099 was proposed to be internally illuminated, and the current submission is unclear in this respect. Furthermore, the bold visually dominant protruding lettering attached to a folded metal back box combined with what appears to be internal illumination, and bold lettering results in the advertisement forming a bulky, dominant, discordant and inharmonious feature on the property and in the street scene.

The proposals are not considered to reflect the historic character of the listed building. The modern aluminium finish would appear conspicuous within the historic frontage. The contrasting, modern texture of the display would present a discordant finish relative to the more traditional features of wider Broad Street fascias. It is considered that due to the modern materials proposed and the overall visually dominant design of the signage and its resultant shiny appearance, when coupled with the materials, that the signage sits in stark contrast to the character of this listed building and it is felt that the building is neither enhanced nor respected by the proposal. Given the building's listed status, the materials should be more in keeping and sympathetic to the historic character of the building, being either timber or painted lettering.

Further to this, the fascia sign is of a substantial width, resulting in an overly dominant visual impact on both the building and the wider area, with the colour and illumination exacerbating the visual impact.

The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that, the quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed.

Public Safety

Due to the nature and position of the proposals, whilst visible, they are not considered to result in any material harm to the amenities of the surrounding occupiers. There are no transport objections to the proposed advertisement subject to an illuminance condition, which are not considered to result in any

unacceptable harm to highway users. As such the proposal is considered to be acceptable in public safety terms.

CCTV

Reading's CCTV team previously raised concern that should the projecting sign be illuminated, that this could obstruct sight to a key camera within close proximity. No projecting sign is proposed under this application.

7. CONCLUSION

For the above reasons, it is considered that the proposed signage would fail to preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building, the desirability of which is the key matter. In this respect, the proposals are also considered harmful to the interests of amenity for the purposes of the Advertisement Regulations.

8. RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE.