

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT FOR CONSENT TO DISPLAY AN ADVERTISEMENT

App Ref: PL/26/0326
Ward: Abbey Ward
Address: 33 OXFORD ROAD, READING, RG1 7QG
Proposals: Fascia and Projecting Advertisement.
Case Officer: Mishga Marshall
Date received (valid from): 11/03/2026
Target Decision date: 06/05/2026
EOT Decision date: 24/08/2026

SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site comprises a commercial premises located on the southern side of Oxford Road, within Reading town centre. The surrounding area is predominantly commercial in character with a variety of retail and service uses.

PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The application seeks advertisement consent for the installation of the following:

- 1no. internally illuminated lettering and logo on a black aluminium fascia signs fixed externally to the building measuring approx. 5.2m x 0.84m
- 1no. internally illuminated projecting sign to be installed externally measuring approx. 0.6m x 0.43m x 0.095m.

The signage relates to the commercial use of the premises and is intended to advertise the occupant's business and associated services.

PLANNING CONSTRAINTS

- Air Quality Management Area
- Tall Buildings Cluster
- Central Core
- Office Core
- Primary Shopping Area
- Proposed Active Frontage

SITE VISIT

Site visit date: 21/04/2026

PLANS AND DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED RECEIVED 11/03/2026

- PP-14770885v1 Location Plan dated 11/03/2026
- SH201 Existing Elevation dated 09/03/2026
- SH204 Proposed Drawings dated 09/03/2026

PLANS AND DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED RECEIVED 18/05/2026

- SH202 REV A Proposed Elevation dated 09/03/2026
- SH203 REV A Proposed Drawings dated 09/03/2026

PLANS AND DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED RECEIVED 24/07/2026

- SH100 REV A Site Plan dated 09/03/2026

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

PL/90/0978 - Illuminated fascia sign and projecting sign. Two window display cases . - Historical
PL/99/1438 - Erection of internally illuminated fascia sign. - Approved 19/10/1999

CONSULTATION

Internal & External Consultations:

RBC Transport: No objection subject to illumination condition.

RBC CCTV: No objection subject to illumination conditions.

Thames Valley CCTV: No Comment.

Thames Valley Police: 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 2026

National Planning Practice Guidance 2014 onwards

Reading Borough Local Plan 2019

CC7: Design and the Public Realm

OU4: Advertisements

TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters

Local Plan Update

The current version of the Local Plan (adopted in November 2019) turned five years old on Tuesday 5th November 2024. The Local Plan was reviewed in March 2023 and around half of the policies in the plan are considered still up to date. However, the rest need to be considered for updating to reflect changing circumstances and national policy. A pre-submission draft was submitted to the Secretary of State on the 9th of May 2025 and is currently at examination.

Although there is a five-year period for carrying out a review of a plan after it is adopted, nothing in the NPPF or elsewhere says that policies automatically become “out of date” when they are five years old. It is a matter of planning judgement rather than legal fact whether a plan or policies within it are out-of-date. This will depend on whether they have been overtaken by things that have happened since the plan was adopted, either on the ground or through changes in national policy, for example.

Officer advice in respect of the Local Plan policies pertinent to this application listed above is that they remain in accordance with national policy and that the objectives of those policies remains very similar in the draft updated Local Plan. Therefore, they can continue to be afforded weight in the appraisal below and are not considered to be ‘out of date’.

APPRAISAL

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 sign and projecting sign are appropriately scaled and proportioned in relation to the host building and surrounding commercial context. While both signs are internally illuminated, these is common in commercial frontages in the area and is not considered out of character.

However, to maintain an appropriate balance between visibility and visual amenity, and to reduce the overall luminance impact on the street scene, a condition will be imposed requiring that the illumination be limited to internally illuminated lettering and brand logo only, rather than full panel illumination; as well as a condition to limit illuminations to only be active during operational hours of the store. This will ensure a more refined and less visually intrusive signage approach in line with good design principles.

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

Public Safety

The fascia signage is to be securely fixed and does not overhang or interfere with the highway or footpath. In the interest of public safety, and to minimise distraction to drivers or pedestrians, a condition will be applied requiring that the fascia signs are limited to internally illuminated lettering and brand logo, rather than fully illuminated box or panel signs.

Furthermore, the projecting sign is not expected to present to public safety as it will be situated to the corner of the shop frontage and set away from the entrance/exit to the shop. Highways officers have raised no objections to the proposal.

The RBC CCTV team has advised that, although nearby cameras do not have direct view of the proposal site's shopfront, excessive illumination could result in light spill into the surrounding area. As such, illumination conditions are therefore considered necessary to minimise glare and light spill, protect CCTV operations and reduce unnecessary light pollution.

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.