

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Thames Ward

App Ref: **a)** PL/26/0849 Full planning permission; **b)** PL/26/0854 Consent to display an advertisement

Address: 153 CAVERSHAM ROAD, READING, RG1 8AR

Proposal: Retrospective application for the installation of an ATM (amended).

Applicant/agent: Ms Natalie Gaunt

Received date: 26/06/2026

Target Decision date: 23/09/2026 (EoT)

Case Officer: Huimin Chen

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

153 Caversham Road is a two-storey end-terraced property located at the junction of Caversham Road and York Road. The ground floor of 153 Caversham Road underwent a material change of use from a motor scooter sales premises (sui generis use) to a grocery shop (Use Class E) by at least September 2021, and this use continued until approximately November 2022. Thereafter, this unit has operated as Bladez Barbershop (Use Class E) and was in this use at the time the application was submitted. The upper floor remains in residential use. In September 2022, part of the existing single-storey rear extension was subdivided to form a separate unit, addressed as 153B Caversham Road.



Front view of 153 Caversham Road, taken by the case officer on 20/07/2026

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

This application seeks retrospective planning permission for the installation of an Automated Teller Machine (ATM), which was installed on 11 May 2026.

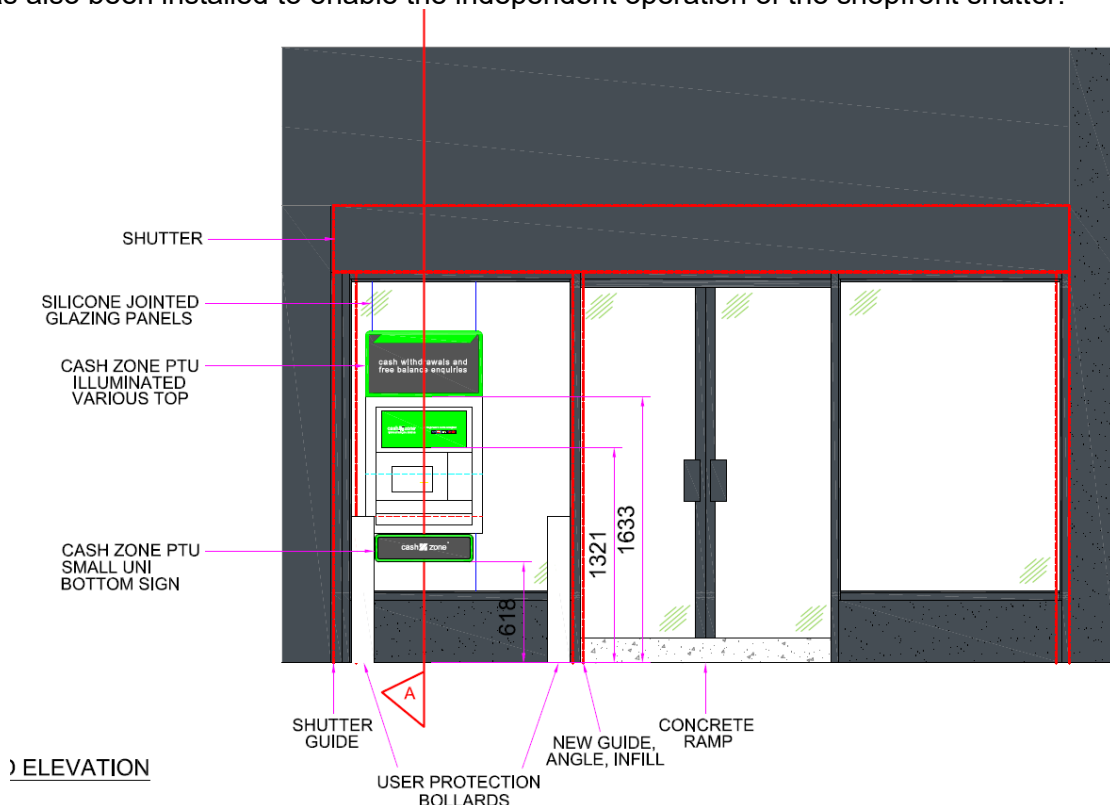
The ATM is positioned on the southern side of the shop frontage, adjacent to the entrance serving No. 153A Caversham Road. The cash machine itself is located internally, mounted on ceramic tiles over a concrete base, and operates through an existing glazed panel. White-painted security grilles have been installed behind the glazing.

Externally, the ATM installation comprises three elements: a top sign, a central section, and a bottom sign.

The top and bottom signs incorporate a green and black colour scheme with white lettering. The top sign displays the wording “cash withdrawals and free balance enquiries”, while the bottom sign displays “cash zone”. Both signs are internally illuminated by static LED lighting positioned behind the lettering and around the perimeter of the raised black panel. The top sign measures 715 mm in length and 400 mm in height, while the bottom one is 600 mm in length and 230 mm in height. Both project 40 mm from the glazing panel of the host building, with the raised black panel projecting 37 mm.

The central section comprises a green Perspex panel displaying white lettering and multi-coloured banking symbols. This section is also illuminated by static internal LED lighting positioned behind the lettering. Beneath this panel is the operational area of the ATM, including the cash dispensing slot, which is finished in grey.

In addition, the development includes the installation of two user-protection bollards adjacent to the existing concrete access ramp to the barbershop. To facilitate the 24-hour operation of the ATM, the existing black roller shutter has been modified and separated between the ATM and the main shopfront. A new guide angle has also been installed to enable the independent operation of the shopfront shutter.



Extract of proposed elevation submitted

Plans considered:

- E030590 NCRA Photo, received on 26 June 2026.
- NCRA0034 REV01 – 6625 ADV green illuminated logo panel with section, dated 21/11/2025
- E030590 Design and Access Statement, prepared by NCRA, received on 26 June 2026.
- E03590 Location Plan, dated and received 11 September 2026.
- E030590 Block Plan, dated 10 September 2026, received 11 September 2026.
- M0045 Cashzone Illuminated Small Uni Bottom Sign Sheet A, received 22 September 2026.

- E030590 - Bladez Barbershop REV 04, received 22 September 2026.
- NCRA0029 PTU Illuminated Top Sign for 6625 Adv Sheet 1, received 22 September 2026.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORIES

- PL/08/1456 (153 Caversham Road) - Change of use from A1 (shops) to Sui Generis (motor scooter sales). Approved 23/12/2008.
- PL/09/0623 (153 Caversham Road) - New shopfront and roller shutter. Approved 16/07/2009.
- PL/09/0624 (153 Caversham Road) - Front and side fascia signs. Approved 16/07/2009.
- PL/25/1691 (153b Caversham Road) - Installation of new signage. (amended). Approved 10/04/2026.
- PL/25/1690 (153b Caversham Road) - Retrospective installation of the front door and roller shutter; retrospective change of use following the subdivision of 153 Caversham Road from Sui Generis Use (motor scooter sales) to Class E Use (locksmiths, Orien Health); change of use from Orien Health to a nail bar within the same Use Class E; and installation of new signage. (amended) Approved 10/04/2026.

4. CONSULTATIONS

The following were consulted:

- RBC Environment Protection team – No objection to both Full Planning Permission and Advertisement Consent applications.
- RBC Transport Development Control – No objection to Full Planning Permission. No objection to Advertisement Consent, subject to one condition.
- A site notice was displayed near the application site. The 21-day consultation period was from 20th July 2026 to 10th August 2026. No letters of representation have been received.



Site Notices

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

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.

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' (Policy S3). The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2026

- Chapter 14: Achieving Well-Designed Places
 - Policy DP3 – Key Principles for Well-Designed Places
- Chapter 15: Promoting Sustainable Transport
 - Policy TR4 – Street Design, Access and Parking
- Chapter 17: Pollution, Public Protection and Security
 - Policy P3 - Living Conditions and Pollution

National Planning Practice Guidance 2014 onwards

Reading Borough Council Local Plan (2019)

CC7: Design and the Public Realm

CC8: Safeguarding Amenity

OU4: Advertisements

OU5: Shopfronts and Cash Machines

TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-related Matters

SPD

Design Guide for Shopfronts Supplementary Planning Document (2022)

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 remain 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'.

6. APPRAISAL

a) PL/26/0849 Full planning permission

Character and Appearance

Policy CC7 states that all development must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is 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.

Policy OU5 shopfronts, individual features of shopfronts and cash machines will respect the character of the building on which they are located and their surroundings, as well as the wider street, in terms of design, colours, materials, lighting, and location.

Policy DP3 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2026 also requires that the development proposals should respond to their context (the history, character and features of their site and its setting), so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings.

The proposal is modest in scale and does not project significantly beyond the existing principal frontage. The installation is located within the left-hand (south-eastern) glazed panel of the shopfront at 153 Caversham Road, one of three glazed panels forming the frontage. The visible components of the ATM are primarily finished in green, grey and black. The two protective bollards are positioned adjacent to, and aligned with, the edge of the existing access ramp.

The LED illumination would be static and internally illuminated, with a luminance level of 100 cd/m². This is considered a relatively low level of illumination and an appropriate design response within the street scene. The top and bottom signs are integrated into the ATM structure and are modest in scale.

Whilst the installation of white-painted security grilles behind the glazing is not considered a particularly favourable design feature, given their visibility from the public realm and their contribution to the overall appearance of the shopfront, they have been installed for security purposes associated with the operation of the ATM. On balance, the harm arising from this element is limited and does not warrant refusal of the application.

Furthermore, this section of Caversham Road is characterised by ground-floor commercial premises with residential accommodation at first-floor level. ATMs are a common feature within commercial centres and shopping frontages. Having regard to the scale, design, positioning and illumination of the installation, the proposal is not considered to detract from the character or appearance of the host property or the wider street scene.

Accordingly, the development is considered to comply with Policies CC7, OU4 and OU5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and Policy DP3 of the NPPF 2026.

Residential amenity

Policy OU4 requires that the advertisements will not reduce visibility for users of the highway or access to the highway; illumination should not detract from the amenity of the area or pose a safety hazard to users of the highway; and advertisements should not obscure the sight lines of cameras installed for public safety. Policy OU5 also requires that safety and security will be maintained and enhanced.

Policies CC8 and TR3 require that development will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties, in terms of noise and disturbance, and crime and safety. And the development would not have a material detrimental impact on the functioning of the transport network.

Policies P3 and TR 4 of NPPF 2026 also require that development proposals should be appropriate for their location, taking into account the likely effects on living conditions, whether these effects are on or off-site; and whether this is as a result of the development itself or the product of preexisting conditions in its vicinity. Development is located where it can support sustainable patterns of movement, enable good accessibility for different users and make the most of existing and proposed transport infrastructure, development proposals should reflect the following principles, taking into account the vision for the site, the type of development and its location.

The application site is located on Caversham Road, a busy arterial route close to Reading town centre, within an area characterised by commercial uses at ground-floor level with residential accommodation above. Sufficient space is available within the public realm to accommodate users of the ATM, including any occasional queuing, without causing undue obstruction to pedestrian movement along the footway. No objections have been raised by the Highway Authority, and it is considered that the development would not prejudice highway safety or pedestrian movement.

Given the limited scale of the installation and its position within the existing shopfront, the ATM is not considered to give rise to any significant adverse impacts on residential amenity. Additionally, security grilles have been installed behind the glazing which are intended to support the secure operation of the cash machine; as such, it is not considered to result in material additional harm to neighbouring occupiers in terms of noise, disturbance, safety or general living conditions.

Accordingly, the retrospective installation of the ATM is considered acceptable in this location and is in accordance with Policies CC8, OU4, OU5 and TR3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and Policies P3 and TR4 of the NPPF 2026.

b) PL/26/0854 Consent to display an advertisement

Visual and aural amenity

Policy DP3 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2026 also requires that the development proposals should respond to their context (the history, character and features of their site and its setting), so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings. Its supporting NPPG, Paragraph: 79 Reference ID: 18b-079-20140306 of NPPG, suggested that the effect on visual and aural amenity in the immediate neighbourhood of an advertisement or site for the display of advertisements would be considered.

Policy OU4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 also requires advertisements to be of high design quality and to respect the host building and wider streetscene in terms of scale, siting, design, materials and colour.

The existing top and bottom signs, together with the Perspex front panel, constitute the advertisement content associated with this application. The advertisements are static in nature and would not generate noise. Accordingly, no adverse impact on aural amenity is considered to arise from the development.

Furthermore, the advertisements are modest in scale and benefit from static internal illumination. The surrounding area is characterised by a mix of commercial premises and residential accommodation, and the signs are integrated within the existing shopfront. Having regard to their size, design, positioning and illumination, the advertisements are not considered to result in significant harm to the visual amenity of the host property or the wider street scene.

Accordingly, the advertisements are considered acceptable and comply with Policy DP3 of the NPPF 2026 and Policy OU4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Public safety

Policy TR4 of NPPF 2026 requires that development is located where it can support sustainable patterns of movement, enable good accessibility for different users and make the most of existing and proposed transport infrastructure, development proposals should reflect the following principles, taking into account the vision for the site, the type of development and its location. Its supporting NPPG (in particular, in this instance Paragraph: 068 Reference ID: 18b-068-20140306 and Paragraph: 078 Reference ID: 18b-078-20140306) provides guidance as to the considerations affecting public safety.

Policy OU4 of Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 requires that advertisements do not prejudice public safety or materially harm residential amenity.

Sufficient space is available within the public realm to accommodate users of the ATM, including any occasional queuing, without causing undue obstruction to pedestrian movement. Accordingly, the installation of the ATM in this location is considered acceptable, and no objections have been raised by the Council's Transport Officers.

With regard to the proposed illumination, the advertisement panels are internally illuminated by LED lighting. Whilst no concerns are raised in relation to the current arrangements, a condition is recommended to restrict the maximum illumination level in order to safeguard public safety and prevent any potential future adverse impacts arising from excessive brightness or changes to the illumination specifications.

Subject to the recommended condition, the proposed advertisements are considered acceptable in terms of public safety. Accordingly, the application for advertisement consent is considered to comply with Policy TR4 of the NPPF 2026 and Policy OU4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

7. CONCLUSION

The proposed development has been assessed as set out above and is considered to be acceptable on that basis, subject to the following conditions.

8. RECOMMENDATION

Approve with conditions

- a) PL/26/0849 Full planning permission

Approved Plans

- b) PL/26/0854 Consent to display an advertisement

Standard Advert Requirements

Approved Plans

Restriction on illumination