

COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee: West/Centre Area
Date: 20 August 2009

Ward: Micklegate
Parish: Micklegate Planning Panel

Reference: 09/00615/ADV
Application at: Odeon Cinema Blossom Street York
For: Display of 3no. non-illuminated signs on the canopy and 1no.internally halo illuminated high level sign.
By: Mr KC Suri
Application Type: Advert Application
Target Date: 1 July 2009

1.0 PROPOSAL

APPLICATION SITE

1.1 The application relates to the Reel (former Odeon) Cinema building. The building is of C20 origin (1937), of brick, built in the Art Deco Style. The main cinema building and its associated shop units are listed at grade II.

PROPOSALS

1.2 Install 3 signs on the canopy (1 on the return). No illumination proposed.

1.3 Install 1 halo illuminated high level (between first and second floor levels) on the southwest (side facing down Blossom Street) elevation of the tower. This part of the scheme has been amended as it was originally proposed to place the sign on the front elevation of the tower.

1.4 No changes are proposed to the existing high level Odeon sign, which is to be retained.

SITE HISTORY

1.5 In 2001 consent was sought to overlay and add new signage to the canopy and replace the high level Odeon sign with a halo illuminated sign, using the standard Odeon font (applications 01/02739/ADV & 01/02740/LBC). The existing font is now unique to the York Cinema.

1.6 Members determined the application in 2003. The replacement canopy signage was allowed, but the proposal to replace the high level sign was rejected. It was deemed that 'the proposed removal of the existing high level lettering and replacement by new letters in the corporate Odeon style would result in the loss of an important and bespoke architectural feature of the building, to the detriment of its character and appearance'.

REASON FOR BRINGING APPLICATION TO COMMITTEE

1.7 The applications for advertisement and listed building consent are brought to planning committee at the request of Councillor B Watson, due to the sensitive nature/planning history of the site.

2.0 POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Development Plan Allocation:

- Areas of Archaeological Interest: City Centre Area
- Conservation Area: Central Historic Core
- Listed Buildings: Grade 2; Odeon Cinema Blossom Street York
- Listed Buildings: Grade 2; 1-5 Odeon Buildings Blossom Street

2.2 Policies:

- CYGP21 Advertisements
- CYHE4 Listed Buildings
- CYHE3 Conservation Areas
- CYHE8 Advertisements in historic locations

3.0 CONSULTATIONS

DESIGN, CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

3.1 The Odeon cinema was constructed in 1937 to the design of the architect Harry Weedon. It is Grade II listed; the list description noting the high quality of both the design and execution of the art deco style. The building is constructed of brick in Flemish bond relieved by horizontal bands and vertical ribs of shaped brick. The fascia to the cantilevered canopy is set within projecting mouldings to top and bottom. The building is prominent in the streetscene and makes a positive contribution to the special architectural interest of the conservation area.

3.2 In officer's opinion, the original proposals fail to preserve the character of the building as one of special architectural or historic interest, or its contribution to the conservation area. The high level illuminated sign would have a wider affect on the amenity of the conservation area.

Canopy signs

3.3 The existing signage attached to the canopy (now removed) appears to be a later addition, and is not in the same font used on the existing high-level sign, the latter being applied in deference to the historic character of York. It's removal and replacement with a suitably designed advertisement could preserve the character of the building as one of special architectural or historic interest, and its contribution to that of the conservation area.

3.4 Officers objected to the original scheme due to the size of the letters which would appear out of scale with the fascia, the material (perspex), which would not be

sympathetic to the surface to which the signs would be attached, and the proposed internal illumination, which would make the signs appear unduly intrusive in relation to both the building and the streetscene.

Sign to tower

3.5 The sign on the front elevation of the tower would cut across vertical, shaped brick ribs, to some extent harming the balance of vertical and horizontal emphases exhibited in the architectural composition. In so doing, it fails to preserve the architectural interest of the building. By virtue of its location and illumination, it will be obtrusive in the streetscene.

Amendments

3.6 Officers agreed to the principle of the relocation of the high level sign to the side elevation and use of halo illumination as historically the building has displayed high level illuminated signage. Officers now support the canopy signs proposed, as it is no longer proposed to use illumination and the size and materials (aluminium is now proposed) have been amended. Detailed comments are awaited with regards the amended high level sign, in particular its scale and projection from the building.

HIGHWAY NETWORK MANAGEMENT

3.7 No objection in principle. Ask if consent be granted, it is subject to a condition which controls glare from the lighting.

PLANNING PANEL

3.8 No objection.

CONSERVATION AREAS ADVISORY PANEL

3.9 Support signage (including if illuminated) to the canopy, but not high level signage on the front elevation.

PUBLICITY

3.10 The application was publicised by site notice, press notice and letters of neighbour notification. The deadline for comments was 10.6.09. No written representations have been made.

4.0 APPRAISAL

KEY ISSUES

4.1 The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007 state that powers under these regulations can only be exercised in the interests of amenity and public safety. Factors relevant to amenity include the presence of any features of historic or architectural interest.

4.2 In considering amenity, it is a requirement of Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to preserve the special historic interest of the listed building and the character and appearance of the conservation area.

POLICY

4.3 PPG19 Outdoor Advertisement Control advises that special care is essential to ensure that any advertisement displayed on, or close to a listed building does not detract from the integrity of the building's design, historical character or structure, and does not spoil or compromise its setting. Paragraph 4 states that a building can contribute positively to a sense of pride and place, however it warns that the appearance of a building can be spoilt by a poorly designed or insensitively placed sign, or by choice of the sign/adverts materials, colour, proportion or illumination which are out of keeping with the building's design or fabric. Such signs can appear over-dominant and out of place.

Of the Local Plan, policies GP21, HE3, HE4 and HE8 are relevant.

4.4 Policy GP21 states that where advertisement consent is required, it will be granted for signs where: their size, design, materials, colouring and any form of illumination does not detract from the visual amenity of the areas in which they are displayed, particularly with regard to the character of listed buildings or conservation areas; where there is no adverse effect on public safety; and in residential areas and on sites clearly visible from roads, the advertisement is in keeping with the scale of surrounding buildings and public areas.

4.5 Policy HE8 states that within conservation areas, or on listed buildings, advertisements will consist of a design and scale that respects the character and appearance of the area; and good quality materials that are sympathetic to the surface to which they are attached. Within conservation areas externally illuminated adverts that require large light fittings will not be permitted.

4.6 Policies HE4 states that listed building consent will only be granted when there is no adverse effect on the character, appearance or setting of the building. HE3 states that within conservation areas, proposals will only be permitted where there is no adverse effect on the character or appearance of the area.

CANOPY SIGNS

4.7 3no. signs are proposed spaced over the canopy (2 on the front elevation, 1 on the side). The signs would not be illuminated. The text would be of aluminium and fixed directly to the canopy. The 'REEL' text would be 500mm high so it is inset 50mm between the mouldings to the top and bottom of the canopy. The mouldings at the top and bottom of the canopy are to be painted a dark grey/black.

4.8 The canopy has been designed to accommodate signage. The Odeon letters to be replaced are not original (both the lettering and the shape/design of the canopy have been subject to alterations) and not of any historic/architectural interest. The proposed lettering is of reasonable scale and materials and respects the appearance

of the listed building. The signs would not have a material impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.

4.9 The canopy is existing, replacement signs, which are not illuminated would have a neutral impact on safety.

HIGH LEVEL SIGN ON TOWER

4.10 The sign has been moved from the front elevation, as in that location it was considered the sign would clutter the elevation, given the existing sign, and also it cut across the vertical brick banding and did not relate to the fabric, design of the building. As such it would detract from the appearance of the listed building and the conservation area.

4.11 As amended the sign would be on the southwest elevation, where there is no competing signage. The sign would not clutter the building in this respect.

4.12 It is proposed the lettering be stainless steel, 5cm thick, with a 2cm stand-off from the brickwork. The 'REEL' lettering would be 4m tall, with the cinema box below 35cm tall. The sign would be located in the area between second and first floor windows, to the side of the brick banding. Officers consider the lettering at this level is not in principle inappropriate on this building, given that it has always carried high level and prominent signage. In relation to the scale of the building the letters would be of reasonable proportion and not over prominent due to their thickness, size and location. The halo illumination would be subtle and the steel lettering of acceptable quality.

4.13 Overall the sign relates to the design of the building and is of appropriate size/materials/retrained illumination. It would not detract from the appearance of the listed building or the conservation area.

SAFETY

4.14 The signs due to their location and subtle illumination would not have an adverse impact on safety.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 In accordance with PPG19 and policies GP21, HE3, HE4 and HE8 of the Local Plan the proposed signage, due to its location, scale, design, materials and the proposed means of illumination, respects the design of the listed building and would not detract from the character and appearance of the conservation area.

5.2 There would not be an adverse impact on safety, due to the location of the signs and type of illumination proposed.

COMMITTEE TO VISIT

6.0 RECOMMENDATION: Approve

- 1 PLANS1 Approved plans - 005E and 006D
- 2 HWAY37 Control of glare etc from lighting

**7.0 INFORMATIVES:
Notes to Applicant**

1. REASON FOR APPROVAL

In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the proposal, subject to the conditions listed above, would not cause undue harm to interests of acknowledged importance for the following reasons:

In accordance with PPG:19 Advertisements and policies GP21, HE3, HE4 and HE8 of the City of York Local Plan the proposed signage, due to its location, scale, design, materials and the proposed means of illumination, respects the design of the listed building and would not detract from the character and appearance of the conservation area.

There would not be an adverse impact on safety, due to the location of the signs and type of illumination proposed.

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