

COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee: West/Centre Area **Ward:** Micklegate
Date: 20 August 2009 **Parish:** Micklegate Planning Panel

Reference: 09/00616/LBC
Application at: Odeon Cinema Blossom Street York
For: Display of 3no. signs to the canopy and 1no. halo illuminated high-level sign.
By: Mr KC Suri
Application Type: Listed Building Consent
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 1st and 2nd 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 See application 09/00615/ADV

REASON FOR BRINGING APPLICATION TO COMMITTEE

1.7 See application 09/00615/ADV

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:

- CYHE4 Listed Buildings

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 failed 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.

PLANNING PANEL

3.7 No objection.

CONSERVATION AREAS ADVISORY PANEL

3.8 Support signage (including if illuminated) to the canopy, but not high level signage.

PUBLICITY

3.9 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

4.1 KEY ISSUES

- Justification
- Special historic interest of the listed building

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

4.2 PPG15 Planning and the Historic Environment advises that applications for listed building consent must be able to justify their proposals. They will need to show why works which would affect the character of a listed building would be desirable or necessary.

4.3 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. This is reinforced in policy HE4 of the draft Local Plan which states that listed building consent will only be granted when there is no adverse effect on the character, appearance or setting of the building.

JUSTIFICATION

4.4 New signage is required as a result of Reel occupying the building opposed to Odeon. The applicants have been sympathetic to the listed building status of the building as they agree to the retention of the main high-level Odeon sign on the building, despite its obvious negative implications. The Odeon sign has a font which is unique to York and is thus of special historic interest.

PROPOSALS

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, which respects the original design of the canopy.

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.

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.

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 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 due to its location, size, materials and restrained illumination. It would not detract from the special historic and architectural importance/design of the building.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 The material consideration in this application is the impact on the special historic and architectural importance of the listed building. Due to the location and overall design of the signs proposed officers consider the signage maintains the appearance of the listed building and does not detract from its historic/architectural interest.

COMMITTEE TO VISIT

6.0 RECOMMENDATION: Approve

- 1 TIMEL2 Development start within 3 yrs (LBC/CAC)
- 2 PLANS1 Approved plans - 005E and 006D
- 3 The high level sign to the tower shall be fixed into mortar joints only, and not into the bricks.

Reason: To protect the appearance and health of the listed building.

**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:15 Planning and the Historic Environment and policy HE4 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 its special historic or architectural interest.

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