

(i) 1 No. front entrance fascia sign (6425mm x 3225mm) attached to building. Sign to be non illuminated with the exception of the text below the main logo. The illuminated text would measure 280mm high.

(ii) 2 No. non illuminated product listing signs located at both ends of this elevation (2900mm x 4000mm).

SITE HISTORY

1.3 Retrospective advertisement consent was sought for the signage in situ at Go Outdoors in March 2011. The application was refused for the reason that the number of signs, the extent of illumination and their size, design and siting, would result in prominent, large scale commercial signs that would be unsympathetic to the design of the host building and would create advertisement clutter, harmful to the visual amenity of the Conservation Area.

2.0 POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Development Plan Allocation:

Conservation Area Central Historic Core CONF

City Boundary York City Boundary 0001

DC Area Teams Central Area 0002

2.2 Policies:

CYHE8

Advertisements in historic locations

CYGP21

Advertisements

3.0 CONSULTATIONS

3.1 Internal

Environmental Protection Unit - No objections to this application but recommend a condition to ensure that the large oval "Go Outdoors" signage turns off when the store is not open to the public.

The Environmental Protection Unit has recently investigated complaints of these lights affecting nearby residential properties. Upon investigation it was determined that the lights were not sufficient to be a statutory light nuisance but were affecting the amenity of these residential properties. As a result of this a condition restricting the hours of illumination is recommended.

3.2 External

York Civic Trust - These unauthorised signs are already in position and in the opinion of the York Civic Trust there are too many signs and banners on this building and they are too garish. The subject signs have little regard to either the site or the area. If these signs are refused, that decision should be followed by a Discontinuance Notice in order to secure their early removal.

Consultation Period Expiry Date - 13 August 2011

Ten letters have been received from residents of the Eboracum Way flats development objecting to the application for the following reasons;

- (i) Light pollution to residents detrimental to people's sleep
- (ii) General light pollution
- (iii) Spoils the view of the Minster, Foss and City Walls
- (iv) Significant and unnecessary electricity consumption
- (v) size and colour of signs will be an eyesore
- (vi) Go Outdoors store is painted an unsightly blue, which does not fit the architecture of the area and the signs only further draw attention to this.
- (vii) It is unclear as to the extent of illumination, how bright the illumination will be and what hours it will be lit.
- (viii) When Homebase was on the site, these apartments had not been built. Given this change, it is important that the fall back position is not to look at the signage that Homebase had.
- (ix) the plans fail to acknowledge the presence of a large number of tents which are in front of the Go Outdoors building.

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 character and appearance of the conservation area.

POLICY

4.3 PPG19 Outdoor Advertisement Control 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 signs, 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. Paragraph 22 advises that Local Planning Authority's should use advertisement controls flexibly in Conservation Area, so as to conserve or enhance particular features of architectural or historic interest.

4.4 Of the Local Plan, policies GP21 and HE8 are relevant. 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 The former "Homebase" store now occupied by "Go Outdoors" is a 1980s flat roofed, metal framed building with obscure glazed panels. It

shares the site with "Sainsburys". The site is on the edge of the city centre in an area characterised by a mix of residential and commercial uses being close to the recently developed Foss Islands retail park. It is within the Central Historic Core Conservation Area and can be seen in the context of the City Walls and York Minster. Foss Bank beyond which is the River Foss, bounds the store on its north east and north west boundaries. On the opposite side of the River Foss to the north eastern elevation of "Go Outdoors" is a new residential development accessed from Eboracum Way.

4.7 Historically the signage for Homebase has been relatively low key, with internally lit individual lettering on the two principle elevations.

4.8 In March 2011, retrospective advertisement consent was sought for the display of various illuminated and non illuminated signage at the site. The signage included an internally illuminated oval shaped fascia sign on each of the principle elevations, 10 No. applied vinyl signs and a 6 metre high totem sign. The application was refused for the reason detailed in paragraph 1.3. With the exception of the totem sign, which has since been removed, the unauthorised signs continue to be displayed on site however the illumination of the signs was switched off in response to residents concerns.

4.9 The key improvements with the revised scheme comprise;

- (i) The oval shaped fascia signs have been reduced in size, sited on rectangular panels and the extent of illumination has been limited to the text below the main logo.
- (ii) The product listing signs are no longer externally illuminated
- (iii) The removal of the totem sign
- (iv) The reduction in the number of applied vinyl signs from eight to two.

IMPACT ON VISUAL AMENITY

Elevation A (opposite the car park)

4.10 As noted in previous paragraphs, the main entrance sign has been amended so rather than an oval logo sign which was not considered to respect the form of the building and which also protruded above the roof of the building, the proposed sign now comprises the oval logo set on a rectangular panel. The overall size has been reduced from 6500mm x 3985mm to 6425mm x 3225mm. Furthermore the extent of illumination of this sign has been limited to the bottom 280mm of the sign.

4.11 Given that the sign is not to be erected on the building but rather on steel goal posts sited 1.64m from the front wall of the building, officers acknowledge that this entrance sign would appear large. However in terms of views from public vantage points, the sign would only be partially visible above the high brick wall bounding Foss Bank and with the extent of illumination limited to the bottom 280mm of the sign, it is not considered that it would detract unduly from the visual amenity of the area.

4.12 With respects to the corner 'product listing' sign and the two vinyl applied signs, officers consider that, in view of the scale of the building and its setting within a mixed use area where public views of this elevation are again partially restricted by the high wall bounding Foss Bank, the proposed number and size of signs is not excessive and would not detract from views within the Conservation Area.

Elevation B

4.13 The fascia sign on elevation B has been reduced in size from 6580mm x 3985mm to 6425mm x 3225mm and again the extent of illumination has been reduced. It is proposed to retain the two product listing signs on both ends of this elevation however these signs would not be illuminated.

4.14 From public vantage points, the signs would be visible from Foss Bank and from the Monkgate roundabout but would not be seen in the context of views of the City Walls and York Minster. As noted with respects to Elevation A, in view of the scale of the building and its setting within a mixed use area, it is not considered that the number and scale of the signs as proposed is excessive. The comments from local residents with respect to the illumination of the oval signs are noted, however with the proposed limited extent of illumination and a condition requiring that the lights are turned off between 20.30 to 08.30 every day, officers do not consider that the impact from the illumination would be so significant as to warrant refusal.

4.15 With reference to comments made by residents in relation to the siting of tents within the curtilage of the store and the colour of the building, officers confirm that the outdoors sales area is included as part of the net sales area for Go Outdoors, as it did for Homebase, and therefore the siting of tents within this area is authorised. Furthermore, permission was not required for the repainting of the store.

SAFETY

4.16 The signs due to their location and limited extent of illumination would not have an adverse impact on safety.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 In accordance with PPG19 and policies GP21 and HE8 of the Local Plan the proposed signage, due to its location, scale, design, materials and the proposed extent of illumination 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 and extent of illumination proposed.

COMMITTEE TO VISIT

6.0 RECOMMENDATION: Approve

1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following plans and other submitted details:-

Drawing No: 15 (proposed elevations) dated August 2011 and received 3 August 2011

Plan detailing additional frameworks supports in position received 3 August 2011

Sign Details (insign) dated 1 August 2011 and received 3 August 2011

Supporting statement received 3 August 2011

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out only as approved by the Local Planning Authority.

2 All illumination shall be turned off between the hours of 20.30 to 08:30 every day.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity

3 The existing unauthorised signs and their means of illumination shall be removed within one month of the date of this permission.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity

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 and HE8 of the City of York Local Plan, the proposed signage, due to its location, scale, design, materials and the proposed extent and means of illumination 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 the extent of illumination proposed.

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