

Planning Committee

Meeting Date: 20 August 2024
Contact Officer: Graeme Markland, Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Officer

44 Upper High Street

[P24/S2319/A](#)

Maintain the existing front and right-hand side advertisement fascia boards along with the signage lighting above.

Reason for report:

- The application is a FUL, Outline or Reserved Matters application
- The officer recommendation is to object due to non-conformance with TNP/TNP2 policies, Local Plan, or national standards
- There has been (or is expected to be) local objection
- The amendment changes the Town Council's original recommendation.

1. Officer Recommendation:

OBJECTS:

- The illumination of the fascia does not comply with Local Plan 2035 Policy ENV8 and Thame Neighbourhood Plan ESDQ16 and is deemed unnecessary given number 44's prominent location and proximity to street lighting.
- The use of raised lettering is considered appropriate due to the age of the building.
- It is recommended that should permission be granted signage is restricted to only that displayed on the building's existing fascia, as per submitted drawing number 24-659 03 Rev A.

Call-In

If the recommendation is to object, or likely to be contrary to SODC's recommendation, the Town Council must agree whether to request that SODC Councillors call the application into SODC's committee. Thame's District Councillors are not bound to this request.

2. Key Issues:

This application is retrospective and had been subject to enforcement case (as reported by TTC in March 2024).

- Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Conservation Area

44 Upper High Street is not a listed building, but is situated in the Conservation Area. The unit was formerly used by HSBC Bank and the name (HSBC) and logo of the company were placed centrally on each of the two fascia. The lettering and logo were made from

raised plastic which could be considered appropriate, given that the unit was built in the 1980s.

Top lighting is proposed for the fascia signage. The applicant has given examples of other shops using this on the High Street. The advice within the Thame Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan is to limit the use of illuminated signs within the Conservation Area. The Appraisal states it may be justified to illuminate the signage of businesses that have to open late and it is notable that the examples the applicant's agent have found are for the Sainsbury's and Morrisons food stores, both of which open late into the evening.

The position of the shop is prominent, being on a corner plot. The use of raised aluminium lettering could again be considered appropriate, given the age of the unit. The illumination is not, however, justified, given the site's prominent location and that the opening hours of the shop would not regularly exceed normal daytime opening hours. The unit is in any case immediately adjacent to a lamppost that provides adequate illumination.

The unit appears to also feature signage on the stall risers and a large clock on the Rooks Lane elevation, hence the officer recommendation.

Photos of site at March 2024:



3. Planning History:

Application Number	Description	TTC Decision	SODC Decision
P14/S3529/A	Proposed new signage (Amended plans received 2014_12_19 to omit the use of metal fascia and all illumination and to use a wooden hanging sign rather than a metal hanging sign).	Refused (Unable to consider amendment)	Granted
P14/S3525/FUL	Removal of existing ATM machine and replace with new ATM machine.	Approved	Granted

P17/S0881/A	Two x fascia signs and one projecting sign and six other signs	Approved	Granted
P20/S0242/A	Replacement of existing ATM header signage.	No objections plus comment	Granted

4. Risk Appraisal

Dependent on the Town Council's recommendation to SODC is it likely that there would be a contrary decision by SODC? If so then a councillor should be nominated at the meeting to represent the views of the Town Council at the planning committee.

5. Policies Relevant to the Application

The following policies are of particular relevance when considering this application.

Thame Neighbourhood Plan

- WS13 Support improvements to existing employment areas
- ESDQ15 Developers must demonstrate in a Design and Access Statement how their proposed development reinforces Thame's character
- ESDQ16 Development must relate well to its site and its surroundings
- ESDQ17 Development must make a positive contribution towards the distinctive character of the town as a whole
- ESDQ18 New development must contribute to local character by creating a sense of place appropriate to its location
- ESDQ19 The Design and Access Statement and accompanying drawings must provide sufficient detail for proposals to be properly understood
- ESDQ20 Building style must be appropriate to the historic context
- ESDQ26 Design new buildings to reflect the three-dimensional qualities of traditional buildings

SODC Local Plan 2035 Policies

- DES1 Delivering high quality development
- DES2 Enhancing local character
- DES3 Design and access statements
- DES5 Outdoor amenity space
- DES7 Efficient use of resources
- DES8 Promoting sustainable design
- ENV6 Historic environment
- ENV7 Listed buildings
- ENV8 Conservation areas
- TC5 Primary Shopping Areas