

South Oxfordshire District Council – Delegated Report

APPLICATION NO.	P24/S2319/A
SITE PROPOSAL	44 Upper High Street Thame, OX9 2DW Maintain the existing front and right-hand side advertisement fascia boards. (Development description amended 17 September 2024. Amended Plans received 17 September 2024 showing illumination removed from signage).
AMENDMENTS	Illumination omitted from the application
APPLICANT	The Watch Doctor
APPLICATION TYPE	ADVERTISEMENT
REGISTERED	25.7.2024
TARGET DECISION DATE	19.9.2024
PARISH	THAME
WARD MEMBERS	Pieter-Paul Barker Kate Gregory David Bretherton
OFFICER	Lilua Iheozor-Ejiofor

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND PROPOSAL

- 1.1 I recommend that advertisement consent is granted for the reasons set out in this report.
- 1.2 The application building is a commercial property within the town centre of Thame. The building is not listed but lies within the Thame Conservation Area.
- 1.3 The application seeks retrospective advertisement consent for signages to the front (northeast) and side (west) elevations of the building.
- 1.4 The advertisement application has been amended during the application process to show the illumination omitted from the proposal.
- 1.5 An enforcement investigation (ref SE24/30) is currently running in relation to this application

2.0 SUMMARY OF CONSULTATIONS & REPRESENTATIONS

- 2.1 Thame Town Council – 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.*

No neighbour representations were received

3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- | Application Number | Description of development | Decision and date |
|-----------------------------|--|-------------------|
| 3.1 SE24/30 | Without planning permission the erection | () |

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	of advertisement signs to a building in a conservation area.	
P20/S0242/A	Replacement of existing ATM header signage.	Approved (16/03/2020)
P17/S0881/A	Two x fascia signs and 1 projecting sign and 6 other signs.	Approved (28/04/2017)
P14/S3529/A	Proposed new signage	Approved (09/01/2015)

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

4.1 N/A

5.0 POLICY & GUIDANCE

5.1 Development Plan Policies

South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 (SOLP) Policies:

- DES1 - Delivering High Quality Development
- DES2 - Enhancing Local Character
- ENV8 - Conservation Areas

Emerging Joint Local Plan 2041

The Council is preparing a Joint Local Plan covering South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse, which when adopted will replace the existing local plan. Currently at the Regulation 18 stage, the Joint Local Plan Preferred Options January 2024 has limited weight when making planning decisions. The starting point for decision taking will remain the policies in the current adopted plan.

5.2 Thame Neighbourhood Plan

- WS13 - Support improvements to existing employment areas
- 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

5.3 Supplementary Planning Guidance/Documents

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Joint Design Guide 2022
Traditional Shopfront Design

5.4 National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance

5.5 Other Relevant Legislation

Human Rights Act 1998

The provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 have been taken into account in the processing of the application and the preparation of this report.

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Equality Act 2010

In determining this planning application the Council has regard to its equalities obligations including its obligations under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

6.0 **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

6.1 **The relevant planning considerations are the following:**

- **Impact on visual amenity**
- **Impact on public safety**

6.2 **Impact on visual amenity**

The application seeks to maintain the replacement signage on the building. The existing fascia boards on the front and side elevations of the building have been reused. The signage proposed to the fascia uses raised individual steel letters. While the proposed materials are not traditional, this would not be a material departure from the previous signage; furthermore, the signage is of a modest scale which would not be visually intrusive.

The illumination submitted as part of the original scheme was deemed unacceptable as signage inside of district market towns and their conservation areas are expected to be designed in line with guidance set out in the South and Vale Traditional Shop Front Design guide, where illumination is resisted as a way to preserve the special character of the district's designated heritage assets.

The revised scheme with non-illuminated signage has been submitted in line with direction from officers and has gained the support of officers. The proposed signage would be commensurate with this type of location and its existing use. Therefore, it is not considered that the proposed signage would cause an adverse impact upon the character of the site and surrounding area.

6.3 **Impact of public safety**

The signage is not large and obtrusive that it would pose an issue of safety. It would not cause distraction or danger to road users, neither would it hinder the interpretation of any existing road traffic signs.

6.4 **Other matters**

From my site visit in August 2024, the presence of a large clock on the first floor of the west elevation of the property, fronting onto Rooks Lane was noted. This feature was not included and has not been assessed as part of this application.

6.6 **Community Infrastructure Levy**

The proposal is not CIL Liable.

6.7 **Pre-commencement conditions**

No pre-commencement conditions are required

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7.0 **CONCLUSION**

7.1 Advertisement consent is granted as the proposal complies with the relevant Development Plan Policies and, subject to the attached conditions, would not be harmful to public safety or the visual amenity of the area.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATION**

Grant Consent to Display Advertisements

1 : Approved Plans (advertisement consent)

2 : Neighbourhood Plan Policy Informative

3 : UNIQUE INFORMATIVE: Signage



Paul Lucas

Delegated Authority Sign-Off Officer