


Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.

Signed:	Officer:	WH	Date:	19/06/23	Manager:	LH	Date:	22.6.23
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Application Ref:	2023/0309				Ribble Valley Borough Council www.ribblevalley.gov.uk
Date Inspected:	12/05/2023	Site Notice:	12/05/2023		
Officer:	Will Hopcroft				
DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:					REFUSAL

Development Description:	Proposed installation of external illuminated fascia sign and external illuminated hanging sign.
Site Address/Location:	57 Berry Lane, Longridge

CONSULTATIONS:	Parish/Town Council
Objection raised for the following reasons:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Sign is not in-keeping with the character of the area and does not account for the tradition, heritage and charm of the high street set in a Conservation Area- The sign is over-intensive because of the font size relative to the signs area, the bold/bright colours used and the gaudy white background.- The aluminium sign tray with vinyl letters are too modern and no consideration has gone into trying to replicate traditional craftsmanship.	

CONSULTATIONS:	Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies
LCC Highways:	No objection.

CONSULTATIONS:	Additional Representations.
None received.	

RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:
Ribble Valley Core Strategy:
Key Statement DS1: Development Strategy
Key Statement DS2: Sustainable Development
Key Statement EN5: Heritage Assets
Key Statement EC1: Business and Employment Development
Key Statement EC2: Development of Retail, Shops and Community Facilities
Policy DMG1: General Considerations
Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations
Policy DMG3: Transport & Mobility
Policy DME2: Landscape & Townscape Protection
Policy DME4: Protecting Heritage Assets
Policy DMB1: Supporting Business Growth and the Local Economy
Policy DMR2: Shopping in Longridge and Whalley
Longridge Neighbourhood Plan
Longridge Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Relevant Planning History:

2023/0055:

Change of use of Unit 2 from retail unit (Class E) to a Hot Food Takeaway (Sui Generis) with installation of extraction equipment. Shop front alterations to units 1 and 2 – Pending Determination

2023/0092:

Advertisement consent for one main fascia signage box., one projecting sign and one internal digital screen – Pending Determination

2021/1160:

Demolition of an extension, polytunnels and storage building and erection of extension to existing retail premises (use class E) at ground floor and five apartments above. Conversion of upper floor of existing building to create two apartments – Refused

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:

Site Description and Surrounding Area:

The site is comprised of one half of the existing 'Swifts' building which incorporates 53-57 Berry Lane and was formerly occupied by Swifts, a hardware and DIY store.

The building is not statutorily listed but does sit within the Longridge Conservation Area and, along with various other buildings on Berry Lane, is listed as a Building of Townscape Merit. The building itself is mid-terrace with traditional shopfront, sash windows to the 1st floor and a pitched roof, with a number of chimneys spanning the ridge line (although none above 57 Berry Lane).

Proposed Development for which consent is sought:

The proposal seeks advertisement consent for the installation of a folded aluminium fascia panel, 0.73m in height, 0.1m in depth and 7.02m in width. The sign would sit 2.6m in height off the ground, with the maximum height of the individual letters and symbols being 50cm. The advertisement will be static illuminated to a candela level of 600cd/m² utilising a canopy trough light. The sign will say 'SUBWAY' in the branding style currently employed by the company, on a white background with yellow and green letters.

In addition, the existing hanging sign is to be replaced with an aluminium powder coated hanging sign, yellow and green vinyl logo to both sides with external static illumination via a canopy trough light to the same candela. The sign will be 0.48m in height, 0.84m in width and 0.2m in depth, with the maximum projection off the face of the building to be 0.84m with the height from the ground to be 2.8m. The maximum height of the individual symbol is to be 0.35m.

Permission is sought for a period of 5 years, from 04/06/2023 to 04/06/2028.

Principle of Development:

The principle of development is supported, given the proposal seeks advertisement consent in connection with a business use within a Principal Settlement town centre location, in an area that is largely commercial in nature. This is considered compliant with KS EC1 and EC2, and CS Policies DMB1 and DMR2.

However, further consideration must be given to additional policies and key statement with regards to the impact of the proposal on the significance and character of the Conservation Area, with particular regard given to NPPF (2021) Paragraph 202 which states that where a development proposal will lead to less than

substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

Design, Visual Amenity and Impact upon the character and appearance of the Conservation Area:

Context

As per KS EN5, the Council states that there will be a presumption in favour of the conservation and enhancement of the significance of heritage assets and their settings recognising that the best way of ensuring the long-term protection of heritage assets is to ensure a viable use that optimises opportunities for sustaining and enhancing its significance.

This is supported by DME4 which states that proposals within, or affecting views into and out of, or affecting the setting of a Conservation Area will be required to conserve and where appropriate enhance its character and appearance and those elements which contribute towards its significance.

As noted above, NPPF Paragraph 202 puts forward a test where there is considered to be less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset. As such, given the above it is necessary to assess the level of harm to the significance of the Conservation Area as a result of the proposals.

Assessment

In this sense, the proposal is considered to cause **less than substantial harm** to the significance of the Conservation Area. The terrace within which the site sits is centrally located within the Conservation Area and forms a primary elevation, with the building itself being regarded as a Building of Townscape Merit within the Longridge CAA. As per the Conservation Area Management Plan, Buildings of Townscape Merit make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the CA and the Council consider very carefully all applications to alter or extend such buildings. In addition, the CAA states that these buildings are the buildings are considered to be good, relatively unaltered examples, of their type where original materials and details, and the basic, historic form of the building, has survived.

The proposal itself would seek to replace the traditional, wooden painted existing signage with a bulky and intrusive aluminium fascia powder coated white sign. This is more visually intrusive both in terms of height, width and depth, with the bright white illuminated colour dominant in the existing streetscene out of keeping with the style of adjacent advertisements. Furthermore, the width of the sign is far greater than that of the existing, in which the signs were effectively broken up into 3 separate signage sections and utilised a good level of bordering to ensure the advertisements were not dominant and did not cause a visual detriment to the streetscene. With the proposed advertisement, there is no obvious 'break' and no reflection of the existing, traditional shopfront layout and when combined with similar width and dominance of the adjacent proposed signage at 53-55 Berry Lane, is dominant and incongruous to a point where there is less than substantial harm identified with regard to the Conservation Area.

In addition, the height of the letters is considered significant with the majority of adjacent advertisements utilising a more subtle lettering style. The style is evidently modern where the existing was traditional and this disparity is not congruous with the existing nature of the streetscene, even taking into account the existing consented advertisement in that section of Berry Lane.

Whilst the provision of an existing white hanging sign is noted, it is considered that the cumulative impact of replacing and illuminating the hanging sign to match the fascia sign would contribute to the less than substantial harm.

With regard to the materiality, the provision of illuminated powder coated aluminium is not deemed congruous with the existing streetscene and is not complementary or preservative of the character and

significance of the existing front elevation, which appears to be painted wooden signs which are more reflective and complementary of the traditional nature of the shopfronts.

As less than substantial harm has been identified, it is therefore necessary to weigh this harm against the public benefits of the proposal. In this sense, Officers consider the public benefits are limited given they relate solely to the advertisement of the sandwich shop and nothing more. Officers consider there is no justification for the type and style of advertising where more appropriate alternatives could be provided and as such the proposal fails the test as outlined in the NPPF Paragraph 202, and is not compliant with Key Statement EN5, Core Strategy Policies DME4, DMG1 or Longridge Neighbourhood Plan Policy LNDP4.

Highways:

Whilst the application has been assessed by LCC Highways with regard to the illumination and candela level, no objection has been raised. As such no further assessment is required in this regard.

Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:

As such, for the above reasons and having regard to all material considerations and matters raised that the application is recommended for refusal.

RECOMMENDATION:

That planning consent be refused for the following reason(s).

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| 01: | The proposal would result in inappropriate, incongruous and visually intrusive advertisements that would cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the Conservation Area, with very little public benefit identified. As such the proposal fails the test outlined in NPPF Paragraph 202 and is not compliant with Key Statement EN5, Core Strategy Policies DME4, DMG1 or Longridge Neighbourhood Plan Policy LNDP4. |
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