

Report to be read in conjunction with the Decision Notice.								
Signed:	Officer:	BT	Date:	22/3/2021	Manager:		Date:	
Site Notice displayed	N/A	Photos uploaded	Y					

Application Ref:	3/2021/0153	 Ribble Valley Borough Council www.ribblevalley.gov.uk	
Date Inspected:	17/2/2021		
Officer:	BT		
DELEGATED ITEM FILE REPORT:		Decision	Refusal

Development Description:	Regularisation of unauthorised directional sign to Montague Place. The sign is 4.5m x 1.2m and fixed to the fence of 1 Thorn Street.
Site Address/Location:	1 Thorn Street, Clitheroe. BB7 2LJ

CONSULTATIONS:	Parish/Town Council
Clitheroe Town Council have no objections	

CONSULTATIONS:	Highways/Water Authority/Other Bodies
LCC Highways consulted on 12/2/21 – no objections.	

CONSULTATIONS:	Additional Representations.
No representations have been received in respect of the application.	

RELEVANT POLICIES AND SITE PLANNING HISTORY:
Ribble Valley Core Strategy: Key Statement DS1 – Development Strategy Key statement DS2 – Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development Key Statement EN5 – Heritage Assets Policy DMG1 – General Considerations Policy DMG2 – Strategic Development Policy DMG3 – Transport and Mobility Policy DME4 – Protecting Heritage Assets National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Clitheroe Conservation Area Appraisal Outdoor advertisements and signs: a guide for advertisers (2007) Relevant Planning History: No recent planning history relevant to the determination of the planning application.

ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:
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Site Description and Surrounding Area

The proposal relates to an off-site directional sign for the purposes of directing the public to the Montague Place housing development off Henthorn Road, Clitheroe. The proposal is situated at ground level on the garden fence of No.1 Thorn Street just outside of the Clitheroe Conservation Area. The surrounding area is primarily residential with a few commercial properties situated along Bawdlands.

Proposed Development for which consent is sought:

Retrospective consent is sought for the erection of an off-site directional sign.

Principle of development:

The principle of the sales advertising is not unacceptable subject to it being appropriate in terms of the material considerations, namely public amenity and highway safety. The proposal site is also located just outside of the Clitheroe Conservation Area therefore consideration will be given towards the effect of the proposal on the historic character of the surrounding area.

Public Amenity:

National guidance recommends that planning authorities should always consider the local characteristics of the neighbourhood when assessing applications to display adverts and signs. In essence, this involves an evaluation of whether the advertisement or sign is proportionate to and in keeping with an area's surrounding features.

The area surrounding the proposal site is largely residential in appearance and most of the signage in the area is directional or highways related. The surrounding signage includes three small directional signs for Montague Place which are mounted just above head height outside the Ford garage on Bawdlands and No.6 Thorn Street.

The proposed directional sign differs considerably from the surrounding signage in as much that it is considerably larger in size measuring 4.5m x 1.2m and is fixed to a garden fence on a residential street. Furthermore, no other fence mounted signs of this size and nature were found during an inspection of the proposal site and surrounding residential area.

As such, the proposed sign is considered to be an unnecessary addition to the area that is both disproportionate in scale compared to the existing signage in the area and incongruous with the visual character of the neighbourhood.

Highway safety:

The proposed sign is situated in close proximity to the junction of Henthorn Road and Thorn Street both of which are busy main roads that experience high volumes of traffic. As such, the proposed sign will likely command the attention of most motorists however Lancashire County Council Highways have reviewed the application and have no objections to the proposal therefore it is not considered that the proposed works will have any undue impact upon highway safety.

Heritage:

The proposal is situated close to the Clitheroe Conservation Area. The Clitheroe Conservation Area Appraisal (2006) singles out the '*continuing loss of original architectural details and use of inappropriate modern materials or details*' as being the primary threat to Clitheroe's Conservation Area.

These include the replacement of original timber sash windows with uPVC or stained hardwood; the loss of original panelled front doors and their replacement with stained hardwood, uPVC or aluminium doors. Poor quality shopfronts and street clutter are identified as posing additional threats to the area's historic character.

Outdoor advertisements and directional signs are not identified as threats in this particular appraisal and as such it would be unreasonable to argue that the directional sign poses any viable threat to the preservation of the Clitheroe Conservation Area.

Observations/Consideration of Matters Raised/Conclusion:

The proposal does not pose any viable threat to Clitheroe's Conservation Area however it does raise some concerns in relation to public amenity and highway safety.

The proposed sign is not considered to be in keeping with the characteristics of the surrounding area by virtue of its size and siting within a residential area, both of which could pose a potential hazard to highway safety through distracting passing by motorists.

Furthermore, it is felt that acceptance of the proposal would set a precedent for directional signage of a similar nature which in turn would lead to the degradation of other areas through increasing visual clutter.

In light of this, it is felt that a considerably smaller sign at ground level similar to those found on Bawdlands and outside No.6 Thorn street would serve as a far more suitable alternative provided that it was compliant with the requirements of Class 11 of the national guidance on outdoor advertisements and signs.

It is for the above reasons and having regard to all material considerations and matters raised that planning consent be refused.

RECOMMENDATION:

That planning permission be refused for the following reason(s):

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The proposed advertisement due to its scale and siting is considered to be excessive and is an incongruous feature which detracts from the character of this predominantly residential area. In the absence of any justification which outweighs the harm, the retention of this advertisement will have a detrimental impact on the visual amenities of the surrounding area.