

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
PROSPECT ESTATE AGENCY
PLANNING, HERITAGE & DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT
12-14 BROAD STREET
WOKINGHAM
BERKSHIRE
RG40 1AB

Display of 2no. fascia signs and 1no. hanging sign
(Applications for Advertisement and Listed Building Consent)

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CONTENTS

- 1 INTRODUCTION**
- 2 PLANNING HISTORY**
- 3 PLANNING POLICY**
- 4 THE PROPOSAL (INCLUDING HERITAGE AND DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT)**
- 5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning, Heritage and Design & Access Statement is submitted in support of applications by Prospect Estate Agency for advertisement and listed building consent to display advertisements (2no. fascia signs and hanging sign).
- 1.2 The application site comprises of a two storey building which is statutorily Grade II listed. The building is painted white with a plain tile hipped roof. There is an existing modern shopfront comprising double entrance doors and shop windows on either side. Above the existing shopfront is an existing fascia board, together with an fascia signage and a hanging sign.
- 1.3 Historic England's list entry for the building states as follows:

'House and shop. Fifteenth century, with late eighteenth century front. Timber frame, brick front, steep-pitched clay tile roofs. Two storeys. Two-bay timber framed range parallel to the street with C20 extension to rear. C20 shopfront to ground floor; two small paned sash windows to first floor with dentil eaves cornice'.

- 1.3 The site is in Wokingham Town Centre within the defined Primary Shopping Frontage. It also falls within the Wokingham Town Centre Conservation Area which is noted for its historic core including Rose Street, Peach Street, Denmark Street, Broad Street and Shute End. The CA Study states that the existing fabric is still focused around the historic Market Place and Town Hall. Building styles are generally modest, predominantly of red brick with tiled clay roofs. Buildings tend to be of a small scale and offer the characteristics of a traditional Berkshire market town.

2 PLANNING HISTORY

2.1 The applicant undertook pre-application discussions with the Council in January 2026 (Ref.252786) where general support was confirmed. Details of dimensions, materials and luminance were requested, and which are confirmed under this submission.

2.2 The planning history of the site is relatively extensive. The most relevant applications are set out below

060863 – Proposed removal of existing aluminum fascia board and replacement with grain-filled marine plywood spray-painted fascia panel with lead flashing to top edge and 25 mm deep aluminum box sign with applied vinyl letters. Exterior spade lighting. Approved 03.01.2007.

060205 – Listed Building application for replacement of corrugated plastic roof with rooflights set into lead roof covering plus exterior repairs and air conditioning units to ground floor level at rear of building and internal alterations. Approved 01.03.2007.

122163 – Application for advertisement consent for the proposed erection of 2no fascia signs and 1no hanging sign. Granted 08.03.2013

120405 – Application for Listed Building consent for the proposed erection of 2no fascia signs and 1no hanging sign. Approved. 26.02.2013.

3 PLANNING POLICY

3.1 Relevant planning policies documents include the following:

- i) National Planning Policy Framework (2024) (NPPF)
- ii) Wokingham Core Strategy (2010) (CS)
- iii) Wokingham Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (2014) (MDD LP)

i) **National Planning Policy Framework (2024)**

3.2 Paragraph 10 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. In this respect, development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan should be approved without delay (paragraph 11).

3.3 Chapter 12 is concerned with achieving well designed places. Paragraph 131 states that the creation of high-quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

3.4 Paragraph 141 states that the quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed. Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts.

3.5 Chapter 16 of the NPPF is concerned with conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Paragraph 202 confirms that these assets are an 'irreplaceable resource' and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. Paragraph 210 states that in determining applications, LPA's should take account of:

- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

- The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic viability; and
- The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

3.6 Paragraph 212 of the Framework states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting.

3.7 Paragraph 215 of the Framework confirms that where a development proposal would 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.

3.8 It is recognised at paragraph 220 that not all elements of a World Heritage Site or Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to its significance.

ii) Core Strategy (2010)

3.9 Policy CP3 (General Principles for Development) requires, amongst other matters, that new development is of an appropriate scale, mass, activity, built form, height, materials, character and design quality. Proposals should not have a detrimental impact upon important ecological, heritage, landscape or geological features.

3.10 Policy CP14 (Growth and Renaissance of Wokingham Town Centre) - States that proposals should retain and enhance the historic market town character of Wokingham through various means, including conserving and enhancing historic quality and interest.

iii) Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (2014)

- 3.11 Policy TB24 deals with heritage assets. It states that the Council will seek to conserve and enhance designated heritage assets. Proposals should 'at least conserve' and 'where possible enhance' the character and historic interest of the building or conservation area.
- 3.12 Policy TB19 (Outdoor advertising). States that the Council will only permit outdoor advertisements where they demonstrate:
- There is no adverse impact upon highway safety;
 - There is no harmful impact on the amenity of the adjoining land uses;
 - There is no harmful impact on the character and appearance of the area.

iv) Borough Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (2012)

- 3.13 Principle SH6 – states that in general, signs should be positioned on the fascia.
- 3.14 Principle SH8 – states that Internally illuminated signs may be appropriate in some locations away from heritage assets provided they are well designed and in proportion with the building.
- 3.15 Principle SH9 states that generally one projecting sign per shop front will be appropriate, provided that it is designed to complement the design of the shopfront, and to relate to the fascia in size and style.

4 THE PROPOSAL (INCLUDING HERITAGE AND DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT)

- 4.1 The replacement fascia and projecting signs are located in the same position as the previous signs associated with the existing estate agency signage. There are no changes proposed to the existing shopfront apart from a change to the paint colour which will be changed from white to dark green. The pre-application submission (ref.252786) confirmed that remedial works to the window sills, front door and kickboards together with the repainting of the shop frontage would not require listed building consent.

Design and Access Statement

- 4.2 The new signs are constructed from aluminum with acrylic lettering. The main fascia display the company name (Prospect) and company marketing slogan '*see what's possible when property is done properly*'. The proposed projecting sign is hung on a new steel bracket and displays the company icon 'P.'.
- 4.3 The fascia signs sit evenly space on the fascia board. Each sign is 2.2m long and 0.47m high with an overall depth (thickness) of 0.06m (60mm). The aluminum tray fascias are spray painted dark green with further dark green, pale green and white lettering/backgrounds (powder in Green RAL 6018 & 6012). The fascias signs do not require illumination.
- 4.4 The projecting sign (painted timber swinging sign panel) has the same colours as the fascia signs and displays the company icon 'P.' in pale green. The sign will be positioned in the place as the previously granted projecting sign. It has dimensions of 500mm x 600mm and a depth (thickness) of 50mm. The sign will be static illuminated (externally by troughlights) with an illuminance level of 400cd/m².
- 4.5 Paragraph 141 of the NPPF reaffirms that advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts. These issues are therefore considered below.

Public Safety

- 4.6 The base of the fascia signs is 2.3 metres above ground level and the base of the projecting sign is 3.1 metres from ground level. There is therefore no danger or inconvenience to pedestrians using the pavement below.
- 4.7 The signage is also above eye level for drivers and would not cause an obstruction to visibility. The signage and level of static illumination is low key and will not be distracting for road users.

Amenity

- 4.8 The proposed fascia signs have a depth of 60mm and do not require illumination. The proposal type of illumination and low luminescence levels of 400 cd/m² for the projecting sign ensures that there will be no significant light spillage. Accordingly, the living conditions of the occupiers of nearby flats, or occupiers of any other nearby properties, will not be harmed.
- 4.9 The proposed signage would therefore not have any adverse impact on highway safety or public amenity and would comply with Policy TB19 of the MDD LP.
- 4.10 The pre-application response confirmed that the limited scale of the works would be compatible with the retail character of the centre and its role in the hierarchy of retail centres.

Heritage Statement

- 4.11 Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) requires the decision maker, in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

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- 4.12 In relation to Conservation Areas, Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that ‘...*special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area*’.
- 4.13 The NPPF states that a Heritage Impact Statement should be ‘appropriate’ to the asset’s significance and enable an assessment of any heritage assets and how the proposed development may affect it.
- 4.14 The proposal fascia signs either side of the existing timber fascia panel and would not be overly dominant or visually obtrusive. The proposed lettering is also relatively small and well-proportioned in relation to the signage. The fascia signs will not be illuminated. The projecting sign will be constructed from traditional materials and fittings and will be externally illuminated with a level and type of illumination appropriate to the conservation area.
- 4.15 Given the very low-key nature of the illumination and the signs size and depth, the proposed signage would not result in any material harm to the character and appearance of the existing building or the Conservation Area. The signs would also be in keeping with the size and scale and level of illumination of other fascia signs along the same development’s frontage. The Council’s Heritage Officer raised no objection to the proposals under the pre-application submission.
- 4.16 In terms of the statutory test, the proposal will ‘preserve’ the special architectural and historic character of the Grade II listed building and the wider character and appearance of the conservation area thereby meeting the statutory duty in Sections 66(1) and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. As there would be no material harm to the building’s significance, paragraph 215 of the Framework is not engaged and there is no requirement to consider any public benefits arising. Policy CP3 of the CS and Policy TB24 of the MDDD are also met.

5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 The applications should be supported for the following reasons:

- i) The applicant undertook pre-application discussions with the Council in January 2026 (Ref.252786) where general support was confirmed. Details of dimensions, materials and luminance were requested, and which are confirmed under this submission.
- ii) The signs are positioned in a similar location on the building as the previous fascia and projecting signs and likewise are constructed from the same materials (aluminium tray fascias and timber swinging sign panel). The proposed signage is modest in terms of overall size and depth and would not result in visual clutter. There would be no material harm to highway safety or to public amenity and the proposal complies with Policy TB19 of the MDD LP and the Borough Design Guide.
- iii) The proposed signage complements the design of the shopfront and is in proportion with the size and scale of the building. The fascia signs are well designed with relatively small lettering and company icons and a discrete level of external illumination for the projecting sign. The signs are not overly dominant or visually obtrusive and fully respect the character and appearance of Wokingham town centre. There would be no material harm to the listed building. Accordingly, the proposal would preserve the special architectural and historic character of the Grade II listed building and the wider character and appearance of the conservation area thereby meeting the statutory duty set out in the Act, Section 16 of the NPPF, Policy CP3 of the CS and Policy TB24 of the MDDD.