

APPLICATION: MA/12/0294 Date: 17 February 2012 Received: 17 February 2012

APPLICANT: Miss A Fraser - Communications, Maidstone Borough Council

LOCATION: UNION STREET WEST CAR PARK, UNION STREET, MAIDSTONE,  
KENT

PARISH: Maidstone

PROPOSAL: Advertisement consent for the installation of 1(no) non-illuminated  
free-standing poster case as shown on the 1:1250 scale site  
location plan and supporting documents received on 17/02/12.

AGENDA DATE: 29th March 2012

CASE OFFICER: Angela Welsford

The recommendation for this application is being reported to Committee for decision because:

- The Council is the applicant.

## **1.0 POLICIES**

- Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan 2000: ENV8
- The South East Plan RSS 2009: BE1
- Government Policy: PPG19 – Outdoor Advertisement Control

## **2.0 HISTORY**

2.1 None.

## **3.0 CONSULTATIONS**

3.1 PARISH COUNCIL: Not applicable.

## **4.0 REPRESENTATIONS**

4.1 NEIGHBOURS: No response received to date.

## **5.0 CONSIDERATIONS**

### **5.1 Site and Surroundings**

5.1.1 This application relates to a pay-&-display car park located on the southern side of Union Street on the outskirts of Maidstone town centre. There is a Quaker Meeting House to the east and dwellings located to the west and opposite.

### **5.2 Proposal**

5.2.1 Advertisement consent is sought to erect a free-standing non-illuminated poster case at the front edge of the car park, facing the pavement, on the eastern side of the access. This would have an aluminium frame, finished in the Council's corporate blue and would measure 1.6m in height by 1.09m in width. It would stand on a post 0.3m above ground level. It is understood that the advertising space within would be sold, but that any advertisement placed there would be a non-illuminated poster.

### **5.3 Assessment**

5.3.1 PPG19 requires consideration to be given to the issues of visual amenity and public safety, and, indeed, visual amenity and public safety are the only considerations for this type of application under The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007. The most relevant policy under the Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan 2000 is Policy ENV8 which permits new advertisements provided that, in terms of scale and design, they would not be detrimental to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

5.3.2 In terms of visual amenity, there is some existing signage on the frontage of the car park and at the adjacent Quaker Meeting House, so the proposed poster case would not look out of place, but nevertheless would not result in an over-provision of signs or a cluttered appearance. It would be of modest scale and relatively unobtrusive nature, (since it would not be illuminated), and the 'Corporate Blue' finish would ensure that it blends with the existing street-furniture, such that it would not have a detrimental impact upon the character or appearance of the surroundings. Due to the small surface area, of only approximately 1.7m<sup>2</sup>, it is my view that any advertisement inserted into the poster case would not appear prominent or obtrusive. In summary, therefore, I find the proposal to be acceptable in terms of its impact on visual amenity.

5.3.3 The poster case would be positioned at the front edge of the car park, (where it meets the back edge of the pavement), and aligned with the existing signage

and street-furniture such that it would not affect driver visibility for vehicles exiting the car park onto Union Street. It is therefore considered acceptable in terms of highway safety. Similarly, as its position would not obstruct the pavement, or reduce its width, and given that it would only stand 0.3m above ground level, it would not have a significant effect on public safety.

## **6.0 CONCLUSION**

6.1 Taking all of the above into account, it is considered overall that the proposal complies with Development Plan policy and the Central Government guidance as set out in PPG19. I therefore recommend that Members grant approval subject to the conditions set out below.

## **7.0 RECOMMENDATION**

GRANT ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT subject to the following conditions:

1. (i) No advertisement is to be displayed without the permission of the owner of the site or any other person with an interest in the site entitled to grant permission.
  - (ii) No advertisement shall be sited or displayed so as to-
    - (a) endanger persons using any highway, railway, waterway, dock, harbour or aerodrome (civil or military);
    - (b) obscure, or hinder the ready interpretation of, any traffic sign, railway signal or aid to navigation by water or air; or
    - (c) hinder the operation of any device used for the purpose of security or surveillance or for measuring the speed of any vehicle.
  - (iii) Any advertisement displayed, and any site used for the display of advertisements, shall be maintained in a condition that does not impair the visual amenity of the site.
  - (iv) Any structure or hoarding erected or used principally for the purpose of displaying advertisements shall be maintained in a condition that does not endanger the public.
  - (v) Where an advertisement is required under these Regulations to be removed, the site shall be left in a condition that does not endanger the public or impair visual amenity.

Reason: In accordance with the provisions of Regulation 14 of The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

2. The advertisement(s) for which consent is hereby granted must be removed in accordance with condition 1 (iii) within five years of the date of this consent;

Reason: In accordance with the provisions of Regulation 14 of The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

The proposed development, subject to the conditions stated, is considered to comply with the policies of the Development Plan (Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000 and the South East Plan 2009) and there are no overriding material considerations to indicate a refusal of planning consent.