

## REPORT SUMMARY

<b>REFERENCE NO - 15/503305/ADV</b>			
<b>APPLICATION PROPOSAL</b> An application for advertisement consent for 3 No. vinyl fascia signs			
<b>ADDRESS</b> Maidstone Borough Council Maidstone House King Street Maidstone Kent ME15 6JQ			
<b>RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL</b>			
<b>SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION/REASONS FOR REFUSAL</b>  The proposed development presents no adverse impacts upon the host building area and is in accordance with policy ENV8 of the local plan and paragraph 67 of the NPPF.			
<b>REASON FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE</b>  The applicant is Maidstone Borough Council.			
<b>WARD</b> High Street Ward	<b>PARISH/TOWN COUNCIL</b> N/A	<b>APPLICANT</b> Mrs Karen Franek <b>AGENT</b> N/A	
<b>DECISION DUE DATE</b> 23/06/15	<b>PUBLICITY EXPIRY DATE</b> 23/06/15	<b>OFFICER SITE VISIT DATE</b> 06/05/15	
<b>RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY (including appeals and relevant history on adjoining sites):</b>			
<b>App No</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Decision</b>	<b>Date</b>
08/1723	An application for Advertisement consent for the erection of non-illuminated fascia sign, displaying occupier's logo as shown on drawing numbers 0319-8475 Rev 02 and 0319-8454 Rev 01 received on 22/08/08 and drawing no.s 0319-1103 Rev 07 and 0616-060406-	Withdrawn	

## MAIN REPORT

### 1.0 DESCRIPTION OF SITE

- 1.01 The proposal site comprises of a relatively large glass building known as the Maidstone Gateway, a council owned building in which a variety services, meeting rooms and other facilities the council use and provide to the public are based. The building is located on the south side of King Street in the High Street Ward of the Borough and is attached to the Chequers Centre where it is also accessible from within the shopping centre. It is situated on the corner where King Street meets Pad's Hill, which is the road that provides access for buses to the bus stops of the Chequers Shopping Centre. The proposal site faces towards the north and onto King

Street where opposite lays a car park at road level and a site currently a demolition site. To the east of the site lies Pads Hill and beyond that lies the ramp up to roof top car park of The Mall. To the east and other side of the ramp lies a relatively small two storey detached property that is currently being used as a business and small office. To the west lies the Chequers Shopping Centre and to the south lies the roof top car park of The Mall and also Maidstone House which is accessible from the Gateway via a link bridge. The site is located within an Area of Archaeological Potential and a small part to the south of the building falls within Flood Zones 2 and 3. King Street also hosts a number of Grade II listed buildings, the nearest being 70 King Street 35km to the east.

## **2.0 PROPOSAL**

- 2.01 The proposed development is for advertisement consent for three vinyl fascia signs. The proposed advertisements would be of blue and purple colour with white text and none are proposed to be illuminated. The signage would advertise a new enterprise that will support entrepreneurs and micro-businesses and is planned to be opened in August of this year.
- 2.02 Two of the proposed signs (nos 1 and 2) would be positioned on the east elevation of the gateway building facing towards Pads Hill. These proposed signs would cover parts of the two large scale windows on this elevation. Proposed sign 1 (Main Business Terrace Graphic) would have a total height of 9.6m and a width of 5.5m and would include the text of 'The Business Terrace'. The letters of the text of 'The Business' would have a height of approximately 30cm and the word 'Terrace' would have an approximate height of 70cm. This sign would be the full length of the window, but the sign is designed so that the colour and text is most prominent at the top of the sign and fades away toward the bottom of the sign. This proposed base of this sign would be 1.4m from ground level.
- 2.03 Sign no. 2, Aim High Graphic, would also positioned on the east elevation of this building, but would be positioned further south than sign no.1 and would be situated on the higher window located on this elevation. This proposed sign would have a height of 5.52m, a width of 3.22m and would be positioned 10.76m from ground level. This proposed sign is also designed so that the colour and text is most prominent at the highest point of the sign and fades towards the lower end. The advertisement would include the text 'Aim High' where the height of the letters would be around 60cm. Both of these proposed signs would also include smaller less prominent text that would be perpendicular to the main text of each sign.
- 2.04 The final sign would be situated across the link bridge that joins the Gateway building and Maidstone House and runs across the entrance way to The Mall roof top car park. This sign would also face towards the East. The proposed advertisement would cover the majority of the bridge, but is proposed to leave an gap in the middle which effectively splits this proposed sign in to two which are of a similar size to each other positioned either end of the bridge. The signs would be the full height of the bridge of around 3m and would cover a total width of approximately 22m. The sign is proposed to have the text of 'The Business Terrace' which would have the same size letters as those in sign no. 1.
- 2.05 Advertisement consent is sought for a period from 01/07/2015 – 23/10/2023.

## **3.0 PLANNING CONSTRAINTS**

The proposal site is situated within an 'Area of Archaeological Potential' and partially falls within areas designated and Flood Zones 2 and 3. There are also a small number of Grade II listed buildings situated along King Street.

#### **4.0 POLICY AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):  
National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)  
Development Plan: ENV8

#### **5.0 LOCAL REPRESENTATIONS**

The consultation period ends on the 27/05/15 and the application has currently received no comments. Any comments received will be reported under an urgent update report.

#### **6.0 CONSULTATIONS**

MBC Conservation Officer – The proposed adverts will have no adverse impact on the setting of adjacent listed buildings. Raises no objection to the application on heritage grounds.

#### **7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS AND PLANS**

1. Main Business Terrace Graphic
  2. Aim High Graphic
  3. Link Bridge Graphic(s)
- Business Terrace External Graphics  
Location Plan

#### **8.0 APPRAISAL**

##### **Principle of Development**

- 8.01 ENV8 of the Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan is the relevant policy for advert consent applications and the proposed development has been assessed against this policy. Adverts and signage are acceptable subject to meeting the criteria set out in ENV8 of the local plan. I would consider the main issues to consider with this application to be the visual impacts of the development upon the character of the area the setting of the nearby Grade II listed buildings. Public safety is also a consideration.

##### **Visual Impact**

- 8.02 I would consider the proposed signs to be positioned on the east elevation of the building to be highly visible from King Street and Pads Hill. The area and street of King Street comprises of a variety of retail and businesses which have a range of signage and advertisement. Although the two signs are of a larger scale than the majority of signs existing along the street they would in my mind not appear out of character or scale as they would be placed on a large building which has a large

glass frontage which already features some signage. I would consider them to not be of an excessive scale in relation to the size of the building and in my mind would relate well to it. These proposed signs would only partially cover the east elevation and I would therefore consider them to be of an appropriate scale, design and colour to not be detrimental to the host building or the surrounding area. The proposed design and colour scheme would also soften the impact of the signs on the area with the colour and text being most prominent at the top and fading towards the lower end of the proposed signage. These proposed signs are also not proposed to be illuminated and I would therefore consider them not to have a detrimental impact upon the surrounding area or raise any light issues. I would consider the design to be of a good quality that has taken into account both the proposal site and the neighbouring properties and that these two proposed signs would not appear visually intrusive.

I would consider that these two proposed signs positioned on the east elevation of the Gateway building would not cause harm to the street scene or area, nor are they considered to harm the character or setting of the nearby Grade II listed buildings, a view also held by the conservation officer.

The other proposed sign is proposed to be positioned on the link bridge that joins Maidstone House and the Gateway building. I would consider that this sign would be significantly less visible from the surrounding areas compared to the other proposed signs and would be most visible to vehicles and pedestrians using the roof top car park entrance ramp and from certain parts of the nearby Sainsbury's car park. This proposed signage would not be illuminated and would be of a similar style design and matching colours as the other two proposed signs. This proposed signage is of a smaller scale in comparison to the other proposed signs and would also not cover the entire link bridge. I would therefore consider that this proposed sign is also not of an excessive scale that would have a harmful effect upon the host building. I would consider the proposed design, positioning and colour of this proposed sign to be acceptable and that it presents no adverse effects upon the area.

Overall I would consider the proposed adverts to have a minimal visual impact, not causing significant harm to the street scene or area, nor would they harm the character or setting of the nearby Grade II listed buildings and would not be contrary to policy ENV8 of the local plan or paragraph 67 of the NPPF and therefore be acceptable.

### **Residential Amenity**

- 8.03 The proposal would have no harmful impact on residential amenity.

### **Highways and Public Safety**

- 8.04 It is considered that the proposed signage would not have a detrimental impact upon highway or public safety as the signage is not proposed to be illuminated and would not result in a distraction to drivers. This view is also shared by KCC Highways and Transportation.

### **Other Matters**

- 8.06 Consent is sought for a period of 8 years (the standard being 5 years). Given that the proposed signage would not have an adverse impact upon the surrounding area or street scene I would consider a period of 8 years to be acceptable.

## 9.0 CONCLUSION

9.01 For the above reasons it is recommended that advertisement consent is granted subject to the following conditions.

## 10.0 RECOMMENDATION – GRANT Subject to the following conditions

### CONDITIONS to include

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 development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 1. Main Business Terrace Graphic, 2. Aim High Graphic, 3. Link Bridge Graphic(s), Business Terrace External Graphics and Location Plan all received 28<sup>th</sup> April 2015.

Reason: To ensure the quality of the development is maintained and to prevent harm to the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers in accordance with policy ENV8 of the Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan 2000 and the guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework 2012.

3.

The advertisement(s) for which consent is hereby granted must be removed in accordance with condition 1 (v) within eight 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.

## INFORMATIVES

Case Officer: James Moysey

NB For full details of all papers submitted with this application please refer to the relevant Public Access pages on the council's website.  
The conditions set out in the report may be subject to such reasonable change as is necessary to ensure accuracy and enforceability.