



20 March 2024

Oxford City Council
Planning Services
Oxford Town Hall
St Aldates
OX1 1BX

Dear Sir/Madam,

ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT APPLICATION – NORTH BAILEY HOUSE, NEW INN HALL STREET, OXFORD OX1 2RP

We have been instructed by our client, Dishoom Ltd, to submit the enclosed advertisement consent application in respect of signage for the ingoing tenant. The proposals will enable our client to display their necessary signage on the buildings frontage in line with their branding requirements as a Dishoom 'Permit Room' signage. The application has been submitted online via the Planning Portal (ref: PP-12928408) and the requisite fee of £165 has also been paid online.

In accordance with national and local validation requirements, the following documents have been submitted with the application:

- Completed Advertisement Consent Forms;
- Site Location and Block Plan;
- Existing Elevations;
- Proposed Elevations;
- Proposed Signage Details;
- Design and Access Statement; and
- Planning and Heritage Statement (included within this letter).

Site Description

The application site is located within a ground floor unit of the North Bailey House, which comprises office and retail units. Planning permission was granted in 2021 for the refurbishment of the building including a Class E unit on the ground floor. This application seeks the advertisement consent necessary for the ingoing tenant at the ground floor.

The host building is centrally located within Oxford City Centre at the junctions of New Hall Inn Street, Queen Street and Bonn Square. The surrounding area is characterised primarily by commercial uses including restaurants, cafes, and drinking establishments.

The site lies within the City's central primary shopping area, the Central Conservation Area and within the setting of several listed heritage assets

Planning History

As previously mentioned, planning permission was approved on 29 October 2021 for the "*remodelling of existing façade, including erection of 4th floor extension. Provision of enlarged ground floor retail unit with new shopfront on New Inn Hall Street and change of use from shop to a mixed-use shop and restaurant within Use Class E. Creation of new building*

entrance on Shoe Lane. Proposed new rooftop plant and enclosure, new PV array and part sedum roof on the roof top. Provision of cycle stores” (ref: 20/03123/FUL).

There have also been various amendments to this consent, with the most recent NMA approved under ref: 20/03123/NMA in April 2023 and allowed for amendments to the kitchen extract duct housing. Various applications have been submitted for the approval of details pursuant to planning permission ref: 20/03123/FUL. It is noted that permission is currently pending under ref: 20/03123/CND12 for the approval of condition 16 (shopfront). This application also includes the menu board for the restaurant.

Application Proposals

Advertisement consent is sought for new signage at the application site, so that Dishoom can customise the buildings frontage in line with their branding requirements and display their ‘Permit Room’ signage.

The specific advertisements sought are detailed on the drawings submitted in support of the application and prepared by Macaulay Sinclair. The advertisement proposals are detailed below:

- 1 no. Fascia Sign
 - 888mm x 90mm
 - Hand painted lettering
 - Externally illuminated by brass trough light

- 1 no. ‘projecting sign
 - 597mm x 330mm
 - Aluminium and acrylic
 - Internally illuminated

Whilst it has been noted that the discharge of condition application ref: 20/03123/CND12 includes the menu board, advertisement consent is also sought for completeness:

- 1 no. menu board sign
 - 555mm X 430mm
 - Ikor wood and Perspex
 - Internally illuminated

Additional signage is also shown on the submitted drawings which are considered to benefit from deemed consent as they are limited in size and non-illuminated. These advertisements are shown on the drawings for completeness only to provide the Council with full insight of Dishoom’s proposals.

Relevant Planning Policy

The statutory development framework for this site comprises the adopted Oxford Local Pla and Policies Map (2020). The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are considered relevant material considerations.

The Oxford City Policies Map identifies the application site as being located within the following designations: Central Conservation Area, Historic Core Area, City Centre, District Centre, Local Centre and Primary Shopping Area, and City Centre Primary Shopping Frontage.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2023)

The NPPF provides the overarching planning policy guidance for development across England.

The importance of well-designed and beautiful places is highlighted in **Chapter 12** of the NPPF.

Regarding advertisements, **Paragraph 141** of the NPPF states the following:

“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.”

In reference to heritage assets and the determination of applications, in **Paragraph 200** the NPPF confirms that applicants should describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting and that the level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance.

Regarding Conservation Areas, **Paragraph 212** discusses how development proposals should preserve those elements of the setting of a conservation area that make a positive contribution, or which better reveal its significance, should be treated favourably.

Paragraph 141 of the NPPF states the importance of well sited and designed advertisements, as the character of an area may be adversely affected. Advertisements should therefore be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety.

Oxford Local Plan (2020)

Policy DH1 ‘High Quality Design and Placemaking’ states that developments must meet the key design objectives and principles that creates or enhances local distinctiveness.

Policy DH3 ‘Designated Heritage Assets’ discusses the importance of historic assets within Oxford, and how planning permission will only be granted if the proposals respond positively to the significance character and distinctiveness of the heritage asset and locality.

Policy DH6 ‘Shopfronts and Signage’ states that permissions will only be granted where the design, positioning, materials, colour, proportion and illumination are not detrimental to assets with heritage significance or visual amenity.

Policy V1 ‘Ensuring the vitality of Centres’ and **Policy V2 ‘Shopping Frontages in the City Centre’** discusses how developments, specifically at ground floor level, should contribute towards active frontages and the overall functionality and vitality of the city.

Central (City and University) Conservation Area Appraisal (CCAA) (2023)

The Central Conservation Area Appraisal (CCAA) sets out the special interest within the Conservation Area. The document includes the background to the City and area highlighting that *“the historic centre of Oxford forms one of the masterpieces of European architectural heritage.”*

The site is located in the medieval and commercial core character zone of Oxfords Central Conservation Area. The site has been redeveloped a number of times since the medieval period; from a modest single range of buildings in the C16-C17, to tenements developed during the C17-late-C19, to a large commercial / light industrial building in the late-C19 (Newspaper House), to the existing 1970s building. It is noted that the building was built in the 1970's and is architecturally of its time. North Bailey House is identified as presenting an opportunity for improving its contribution to the Central Conservation Area.

The appraisal confirms that development should reduce street clutter and improve the quality and appearance of retail areas.

Planning and Heritage Statement

The NPPF clarifies at Paragraph 136 that the display of outdoor advertisements can only be controlled in the interests of “amenity” and “public safety”, taking account of cumulative impacts, as guided by the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended. The National Planning Policy Guidance (2019) provides further interpretation of the Regulations.

As noted in Paragraph 79 of the NPPG: Amenity is not defined exhaustively in the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007. It includes aural and visual amenity (regulation 2(1)) and factors relevant to amenity include the general characteristics of the locality, including the presence of any feature of historic, architectural, cultural or similar interest (regulation 3(2)(a)).

This application seeks advertisement consent for the installation of the signage at the site, as part of Dishoom’s proposed occupation of the premises. The main issues for consideration are the design and appearance of the proposed signs, and their visual impact on the character and setting of the conservation area, the host building and street scene, and any impacts on surrounding amenities.

The proposed signage is modest, consisting of 1 no. fascia sign, 1 no. projecting sign and, 1 no. menu board sign which is consistent with the signage installed on the neighbouring properties within the City Centre. The signs are appropriate in their size, as they are considered to alert customers to the presence of the building yet not detract from the wider character area. Indeed, a limited illumination is proposed across the three proposed signs which should be found acceptable by the Council. The proposed signage has been designed in a sympathetic way to add visual enhancements to the building, all of which are reversable in the future, resulting in no harm to the host building.

The proposed signage scheme consists of painted signs where possible (many of which are too small to require advertisement consent and are considered to have “deemed consent”. The projecting sign and menu boards are constructed with appropriate materials metal/wood and are attached in an appropriate material as to ensure the signs would respect and compliment the character and significance of the conservation area and surrounding listed buildings

The proposal would be acceptable in design terms and would therefore accord with Policy DH1 and DH6 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

With regards to amenity, it is not anticipated that the signs will have any adverse impact on the neighbouring premises as they are all appropriately sized, and feature either no illumination or subtle external illumination, so that they are in-keeping with both the host building and the surrounding area. The proposals would cause no harm to the amenity of any surrounding residential or other uses in terms of loss of light, outlook, privacy, noise or traffic. In addition, and as required by National Planning Policy Guidance, the proposed signage would not:

- Obstruct or impair sight-lines at corners, bends or at a junction, or at any point of access to a highway;
- Because of its size or siting, cause obstruct or confuse a road user’s view, or reduce the clarity or effectiveness of a traffic sign or signal, or would be likely to distract road-users because of their unusual nature;
- Leave insufficient clearance above any part of a highway;
- include external illumination that would be flashing, be a colour which could be confused with traffic signals/authorised signals, or because of their size or brightness, could result in glare and dazzle, or distract road-users.

The proposal would be acceptable and comply with Policies RE7 and DH6 of the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

Conclusions

Overall, it is considered that the unique and bespoke design of the signage is appropriate to this site and will not result in any adverse impacts to the building frontage or wider conservation area. Indeed, it is considered that the proposals (and the proposed shopfront as whole) will add interest to the façade of the building, and regenerate this underutilised building by a high quality and reputable operator. his proposal therefore results in an attractive, vibrant appearance which will preserve and enhance the character and setting of the unit and the wider conservation area whilst continuing to diversify and improve the day and evening economy of Oxford City Centre. The proposal is considered to not adversely affect the amenity or public safety of the surrounding area and is therefore considered to accord with the NPPF and the Development Plan.

I therefore trust that you have sufficient information to enable the application to be validated and to enable a positive determination. In the meantime, should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

