

YEATS LODGE, GREYHOUND LANE

5 x flag poles, 1 x monolith, 2 x micro monolith, 4 x hanging signs; and various other signage.

1. Officer Recommendation:

OBJECTS:

- In proposing development that does not relate well to its site and surroundings the proposal is contrary to Thame Neighbourhood Plan (TNP) Policy ESDQ16.
- In proposing development that would fail to conserve or enhance the Thame Conservation Area the proposal is contrary to Local Plan 2035 Policy ENV6.

2. Key Issues:

- Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

The site currently hosts a number of signs (last checked June 2023):

Existing	Flagpoles	Pole	Billboard	Banner	Directional
All	5	5	5	8	3
				Total	26

It is proposed that there would be an overall reduction in some of the signs by type. Some will, however, be visible from more than one frontage:

Proposed	Flagpoles	Pole	Billboard	Banner	Directional
West frontage	4	1	1	2	2
South frontage	1	2	3	2	
North frontage	2	2	1		1
Site Total	5	4	4	4	3
				Total	20

The quantum and forms of the proposed signage are considered excessive, far beyond that required for the purpose of advertising the completed scheme to casual passers-by. Individually and collectively, they would have a negative impact on one of the main gateways into Thame’s Town Centre and the individual amenity of Greyhound Lane / the Waitrose access road, and North Street.

- Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Conservation Area

None of the signs can be considered permitted development as the site is within the Thame Conservation Area. Outside of the Conservation Area a similar residential site could legitimately place 2 flag poles of no more than 4.6m height, bearing flags of less than 2 sq.m. in area.

There is no declaration of sizes for the flags or signs in terms of area, just heights of the highest point of each flagpole or sign. It is not clear this would, for example, offer adequate

control for a flag advertisement. The signage by design would be highly visible in the street scene. The proposed and numerous forms of signage would partly conceal features of the site that were supposed to help integrate it into the Thame Conservation Area.

The applicant has offered no explanation as to why the signage is necessary. The scheme has been substantially completed for approaching 3 years and a similar signage regime to the proposed scheme has been in place over that period. It is not considered realistic to expect that either a temporary or permanent installation of similar signage would assist with the sale of the remaining units.

Furthermore, the housing units within Yeats Lodge are retirement living homes of interest to those looking to downsize or move to a serviced location in their later years. It is likely that those looking for such a property in the Thame area would undertake a specialist search through an agent or internet search and would not have need of a multitude of signage to find the site.

3. Planning History:

[P22/S1525/FUL](#) – Retention of clear glazed windows of the secondary living room window of apartment 30.

TTC objected – inadequate screening

SODC refused planning permission on 7 June 2022

[P21/S5225/FUL](#) – Application under S73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for variation of condition 15 on planning application P16/S3525/FUL to allow for the first eight occupations in advance of the completion of access, parking and turning. (The redevelopment to form 41 sheltered apartments for elderly, including communal facilities, access, car parking and landscaping). (The redevelopment to form 41 sheltered apartments for elderly, including communal facilities, access, car parking and landscaping).

TTC objected – Poor amenity for current and future occupiers.

SODC – Application under consideration

[P16/S3525/FUL](#) – Redevelopment to form 41 sheltered apartments for the elderly, including communal facilities, access, car parking and landscaping.

TTC objected

SODC refused planning permission

Appeal allowed

4. Risk Appraisal

Dependent on the Town Council's recommendation to SODC is it likely that there would be a contrary decision by SODC? If so then a councillor should be nominated at the meeting to represent the views of the Town Council at the planning committee.

5. Policies Relevant to the Application

The following policies are of particular relevance when considering this application.

Thame Neighbourhood Plan

- ESDQ15 Developers must demonstrate in a Design and Access Statement how their proposed development reinforces Thame's character
- ESDQ16 Development must relate well to its site and its surroundings
- ESDQ17 Development must make a positive contribution towards the distinctive character of the town as a whole
- ESDQ18 New development must contribute to local character by creating a sense of place appropriate to its location
- ESDQ19 The Design and Access Statement and accompanying drawings must provide sufficient detail for proposals to be properly understood
- ESDQ20 Building style must be appropriate to the historic context

SODC Local Plan 2035 Policies

- DES1 Delivering high quality development
- DES2 Enhancing local character
- DES5 Outdoor amenity space
- DES6 Residential amenity
- DES7 Efficient use of resources
- DES8 Promoting sustainable design
- ENV6 Historic environment
- ENV8 Conservation areas