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Item No: 7.7

Application: 172995

Applicant: Colchester Borough Council

Agent: N/A

Proposal: Temporary seasonal signage for up to 6 weeks a year for a period of 2 years.

Location: Town Hall, High Street, Colchester, CO1 1PJ

Ward: Castle

Officer: James Ryan

Recommendation: Approval

1.0 Reason for Referral to the Planning Committee

- 1.1 This application is referred to the Planning Committee because the applicant is Colchester Borough Council.

2.0 Synopsis

- 2.1 The key issues for consideration are the impact of the scheme in public safety and visual amenity terms. The scheme raises not issues in either regard and therefore is held to be acceptable.
- 2.2 The application is subsequently recommended for approval.

3.0 Site Description and Context

- 3.1 The site comprises the Grade I Listed Town Hall and in particular the railings of the main balcony on the High Street frontage.

4.0 Description of the Proposal

- 4.1 Advertisement Consent is sought for temporary seasonal signage for up to 6 weeks a year for a period of 2 years.
- 4.2 The sign that is soon to be affixed to the balcony is a PVC banner 1800mm wide by 760mm in height. It will be purple with 'Merry Christmas #TheColchester7' printed on it.
- 4.2 This advert consent would allow banners of the same size to be affixed to the railings on the balcony as and when the Council require it for the next two years.

5.0 Land Use Allocation

- 5.1 The site is a listed building located in the defined town centre.

6.0 Relevant Planning History

- 6.1 There is a great deal of planning history related to the site but none is relevant to this proposal.

7.0 Principal Policies

- 7.1 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) must be taken into account in planning decisions and is a material consideration, setting out national planning policy. Colchester's Development Plan is in accordance with these national policies and is made up of several documents as follows below.

- 7.2 The adopted Colchester Borough Core Strategy (adopted 2008, reviewed 2014) contains local strategic policies. Particular to this application, the following policies are most relevant:

SD1 - Sustainable Development Locations
UR2 - Built Design and Character

- 7.3 The adopted Colchester Borough Development Policies (adopted 2010, reviewed 2014) sets out policies that apply to new development. Specific to this application are policies:

DP1 Design and Amenity
DP14 Historic Environment Assets

- 7.4 The Emerging Local Plan has been submitted for Inspection and therefore carries a small degree of weight. The policy most relevant to this scheme is:

DM15 - Design and Amenity.

- 7.5 Regard should also be given to the following adopted Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD):

Shopfront Design Guide

8.0 Consultations

- 8.1 The stakeholders who have been consulted and who have given consultation responses are as set out below. More information may be set out on our website.

ECC Highways – No objection. Two informatives suggested which will be imposed.

9.0 Parish Council Response

- 9.1 Non-parished.

10.0 Representations from Notified Parties

- 10.1 The application resulted in a number of notifications to interested third parties. The full text of all of the representations received is available to view on the Council's website. However, a summary of the material considerations is given below.

None received at time of writing.

11.0 Parking Provision

- 11.1 As an application for advertisement consent this is not relevant.

12.0 Open Space Provisions

12.1 As an application for advertisement consent this is not relevant.

13.0 Air Quality

13.1 As an application for advertisement consent this is not relevant.

14.0 Planning Obligations

14.1 This application is not classed as a “Major” application and therefore there was no requirement for it to be considered by the Development Team and it is considered that no Planning Obligations should be sought via Section 106 (s.106) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

15.0 Report

15.1 As an application for advertisement consent the scheme must be assessed in terms of:

- Visual Amenity
- Public Safety

Visual Amenity

15.2 The scheme is a PVC banner which is to be affixed to the railings of the Town Hall balcony. It is a clearly temporary and entirely reversible piece of signage that will be installed until early January to promote the town centre and its shopping offer.

15.3 As the scheme is so obviously temporary and modest in scale it consequently raises no concerns in terms of visual amenity and does not adversely impact on the setting/appearance of the listed Town Hall at the heart of the Colchester Town Centre Conservation Area. The same can be said for any PVC banner of the same size and therefore it is prudent to grant Advertisement Consent for alternative banners to be installed as the Council sees fit in connection with its role as the Borough Council.

Public Safety

15.4 As the proposed banner will be located on the railings of the existing balcony it does not raise any public safety concerns. It is not illuminated so will not cause harm to passing drivers. The Highway Authority have no objection to the scheme. It is therefore acceptable in public safety terms.

16.0 Conclusion

16.1 To summarise the scheme raises no concerns in terms of visual amenity and public safety and therefore an approval is advertisement consent is recommended.

17.0 Recommendation to the Committee

17.1 The Officer recommendation to the Committee is for:

APPROVAL of advertisement consent subject to the following condition:

1) ZQA - Standard Advert Condition

Unless an alternative period is specifically stated in the conditions below, this consent expires five years from the date of this decision and is subject to the following standard conditions:

1. Any advertisements displayed, and any site used for the display of advertisements, shall be maintained in a clean and tidy condition to the reasonable satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.
2. Any structure or hoarding erected or used principally for the purpose of displaying advertisements shall be maintained in a safe condition.
3. Where an advertisement is required under these Regulations to be removed, the removal shall be carried out to the reasonable satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.
4. 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.
5. No advertisement shall be sited or displayed as to obscure, or hinder the ready interpretation of, any road traffic sign, railway signal or aid to navigation by water or air or so as otherwise to render hazardous the use of any highway, railway, waterway or aerodrome (civil or military).

Reason: In order to comply with the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

2) ZQB - *Limited Period Advertisements*

The advertisement hereby approved shall be displayed for a limited period only expiring 2 years from the date of this advert consent.

Reason: To ensure the advertisement display is removed at the appropriate time and does not become a permanent fixture on the Town Hall in the interests of visual amenity

3) Z00 – Non-Standard Advert Display Condition

The advertisement displayed shall be directly related to the corporate role of the Borough Council and shall be no larger than 1800mm wide and 800mm high and shall only be displayed on the railings of the town hall balcony for a period not exceeding 6 weeks. It shall then be removed until such time as a new banner is required by the Council.

Reason: To ensure the advertisement display is removed at the appropriate time and does not become a permanent fixture on the Town Hall in the interests of visual amenity.

18.0 Informatives

18.1 The following informatives are also recommended:

- (1) The Highway Authority reserves the right under Section 152 of the Highways Act, 1980 to remove or alter any sign overhanging or adjacent to the highway which is considered to be an obstruction or a hazard to the safe and convenient passage of the public in the highway.
- (2) All work within or affecting the highway is to be laid out and constructed by prior arrangement with and to the requirements and specifications of the Highway Authority; all details shall be agreed before the commencement of works.