

From: Alex Coppock <alex@communiondesign.com>
Sent: 18 September 2024 15:29
To: Barry, Eleanor <Eleanor.Barry@herefordshire.gov.uk>
Subject: A247 (03.05) The Old Cinema - Freedom Church (1 / 2)

Dear Eleanor

Please find attached updated drawings with a pdf document to follow with our response to the comments received from the conservation officer.

In terms of the drawings, we have reset the signage on the front elevation of the building in order to ensure that they do not clash with the structural banding of the building.

In terms of the canopy, we can confirm that the existing signage will be removed, and the new proposed LED screen will be fixed in its place. There will be no increase in projection of the canopy. The LED screens exactly match the depth of the existing boarding and acrylic signage already on the light box canopy.

We have obviously put a lot of work in responding to the conservation officer's comments. This runs to quite a number of pages in order to go through the detail that we felt was required. However, some headlines from our findings.

1. In terms of the general approach of this application, a lot of research has been done in regard to the former Odeon / Ritz building. The austere wall was designed to provide a backdrop for large format lit signage. This was very much part of the design ethos of these cinemas.

Historic documentation has been provided to show this. The replacement Odeon Cinema located in the New Market setting of the central conservation area, also has an austere facade with Halo lit signage presented in the same manner as is proposed here.

2. In terms of the Halo lighting, this is decorative lighting, not flood lighting and certainly nothing as extreme as can be witnessed in a large amount of signage in the rest of Commercial Road.

We have carried out a thorough review of all the signage applications on Commercial Road. These have all been supported by various planning and conservation officers and nothing that is included within this application is any different or has any increased harm to the listed buildings noted. To this end, we have undertaken a thorough impact assessment according to the guidelines provided by Historic England and we can see that there is either no harm or little to no harm to this application. The benefits provided by this application provide the clear public benefit that outweigh any perceived harm by this signage.

3. In terms of the light box above the cinema. This is a historic light box. It is no longer considered safe, to be erecting access to replace the cinema letters that historically form the changing signage to the light box and in this way, the LED screens are an appropriate modern replacement to allow the ability to subtly change the signage as may be required, as historically provided by the cinema signage.

Overall, due to the level of work research and support that has been provided for this application, we trust that this application can be supported.

We would find it difficult to otherwise understand how this application could not be supported, given its clear historic precedent and the number of other illuminated signage applications that have been approved in the same area, which present no meaningful difference when compared with this application. Since all of the signage has to be judged in the same manner and many of the same signs, we consider contribute less to the Conservation Area than these carefully designed signs based on historic precedent, both for the area and for the building.

I look forward to your thoughts on this.

Kind Regards

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