

## **Design Statement**

New signage associated with change of use

For

55 Green Lane, Northwood, Middlesex, HA6 3AG

*Prepared on behalf of The Farm Restaurant and Bar Limited*

Date      Sept 2023 Rev A

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## 1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this report is to examine the principle matters associated with the signage proposed for the ground floor and first floor elevations at no. 55 Green Lane to enable operation by The Farm Restaurant and Bar.

Application for kitchen extract installation is currently awaiting validation. The application submission date was 19<sup>th</sup> September 2023; Planning Portal Ref PP-12433693.

This statement will provide an assessment of the proposals in accordance with comments previously received and compare them to what is known about the historic appearance of the building. It will demonstrate how the proposals have considered the overall appearance of the building, its position, location and how the designs will enhance the vitality and viability of the wider area. It is considered that the proposals would make a significant contribution to the health of the High Street without adversely impacting on amenity.

## 2.0 Site context and planning history

The application site consists of the ground floor and basement of no. 55 Green Lane, Northwood, Middlesex, HA6 3AE.



The site is on the north side of Green Lane, the main shopping street in Northwood, 150 metres west of Northwood Station – a TFL station on the Metropolitan Line.

Northwood is in general, a linear centre, running along the B469 / Green Lane, centered around Maxwell Road and Northwood Underground Station. The area that the site is in is listed as part of the defined *Secondary Shopping Area* of Northwood.

The site was previously occupied by Barclays Bank and has been vacant for approximately the last 2 Years.



The building is located in the Northwood Town Centre, Green Lane Conservation Area<sup>ii</sup> which comprises the commercial core of the Northwood area and is located around the junction of Green Lane and Maxwell Road, along with the residential areas to the south. The Conservation Area Appraisal Consultation describes the area as: *Characterised by its late Victorian and Edwardian architecture with pitched roofs, half timbering, strong gables, sash windows, leaded lights, dominant chimney stacks, and decorative door surrounds. It is notable for the vernacular character of the parades of shops which is in contrast to the "superior" classical style of the financial institutions.*

Within the above Appraisal Consultation, the site is categorised under *Positive Buildings* – defined as buildings that: *make a positive contribution to the historic and architectural character and appearance of the conservation area. They are a key reason for the designation and significance of the conservation area.*

The site is specifically mentioned in the above Appraisal Consultation which notes that: *The baroque style expresses the importance of the building as does its prominent corner site. It has a strong architectural presence and is one of a group of financial institutions on corner sites along Green Lane.*

The former Barclays Bank had a modern white fascia with blue lettering which was a prominent part of its branding. Therefore, a standard fascia style panel sign can be considered appropriate to this building. The proposed full length aluminum composite panel fascia along the stonework to both elevations can be considered in principle acceptable, as the historic precedents demonstrates for this property. The proposed projecting signage to the building is to be externally illuminated. See Drawings for further detail.

### 3.0 A historic understanding of the original building signage

A review was made of various historic photos which includes:

The original appearance of the site:



55 Green Lane in April 2016

Former Barclays Bank

In 1950<sup>XV</sup>, the Barclays Bank at 55 Green Lane had dark coloured lettering in front of the stonework above ground floor level. It also had a projecting sign at the lower edge of the building (towards 53 Green Lane). Finally, it had a sign at a higher level where individual letters were affixed to the brickwork above the entrance.



55 Green Lane in 1950

A similar view taken in 1965<sup>xvi</sup> shows one key change since the previous picture was taken. The main signage above ground floor level by this time was enclosed in some form of dark coloured boxing and the individual letters were no longer directly fixed to the wall.



55 Green Lane in 1965

### The site today

The site today has had all signage removed. The photo below gives a good idea of its current appearance. You can see the two lines of banding which run around the façade.



*Current Front elevation of 55 Green Lane*

The side elevation has a similar appearance although it is much shorter before the shopfront stops and is replaced with an appearance more typical of residential buildings.



*Corner of 55 Green Lane*

## 4.0 Design Statement

The Farm Restaurant and Bar will occupy the ground, basement and first floors of 55 Green Lane. The restaurant will be a family-orientated establishment and will mostly serve residents, families, and local businesses in the area. It will be a continental style cuisine and dishes will vary depending on seasonal British produce. Permanent menu staples will include charcuterie boards with meat, vegetarian, and vegan options available, fresh handmade burgers, soup, salads, steak, chicken, pasta, and a children's menu.

New signage is required for the premises, that will convey the quality of the brand to potential customers. Due to the historic nature of the building's façade, it is important for the signage to be in keeping with the external, historic appearance of the building and to enhance the overall street scene. The design aspect has maintained regard for the building, its quality and will be a positive contribution for the area.

### Signage on the elevation

- The proposed signage will consist of individual letters, with the company name in the font to match the business branding.
- The overall layout of the front façade is clearly shown in the photomontage below.
- The letters themselves will be cut from brushed gold coloured stainless steel.

The front and side facades work together in harmony using the same typeface, as shown in the photomontage below. (Note that the signage on the streetlamp in the foreground has been partially removed to give a better view of the projecting sign).



## Lighting of the wall mounted signage

Lighting of all signage will be based on the illumination levels guidance in The Institution of Lighting Engineers Technical Report No.5 "Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements" 1973 which is still seen as the current authority on the subject.

The site is located in a built-up urban area. This would be categorised as category E3 (Medium district brightness areas) in the Institution of Lighting Engineers Guidance Notes for the

Reduction of Light Pollution. The recommended maximum luminance for this zone would be up to  $10\text{m}^2 = 800 \text{ candelas/m}^2$  and for areas greater than  $10\text{m}^2 = 600 \text{ candelas/m}^2$ .

The proposed signs in total add up to over 10 square metres, so the luminance will be limited to 600 candelas/m<sup>2</sup>. It is worth noting that this is well below the levels even used by some predominantly rural councils which allow 800 candelas/m<sup>2</sup> in shopping areas.

The signs are totaled together because guidance generally suggests that: *In the case of illuminated advertisements with two panels at an angle to each other, the illuminated area will be defined as the area capable of being viewed at one time at any angle not exceeding 40 degrees to the normal*

Guidance suggests that: *Where the illuminated advertisement consists of fret cut or individual letters the illuminated area shall be defined as the overall area occupied by the legend, words or symbols.* For this reason, the illuminated area is assumed as the entirety of the sign back panel, although the ends away from the lettering will not in reality be illuminated.

With regards to the projecting sign (see below), it is normally taken that: *In the case of double-sided illuminated advertisements each side will be treated independently. The illuminated area will relate to one side only.* In this instance however we are already into the greater than 10 square metres category, so this fact makes no difference.

All lighting will be chosen so as to only illuminate the sign it is next to, with minimal spill to other areas including adjacent windows and buildings opposite.

Except for the projecting sign (see below), the signage will be halo lit using LEDs concealed behind each of the letters. During the day the lighting will not be visible. At night it will create a glow against the back panel around the edge of the letters.

### Projecting sign

Projecting sign will be attached to the front elevation adjacent to the entrance to number 55 Green Lane.

- The sign will be attached to a projecting Brackets fixed to a wall plate, both in black finished metal.
- The sign will be fixed to the poles
- The sign itself will be rectangular, featuring the company logo and name.
- Lighting to the projecting sign will be externally illuminated

The projecting sign is visible in the photomontage. The illustration below gives a clearer idea of its appearance. Background colour is SAGE RAL 6013



See below historic appearance the previous Barclays illuminated projecting signs



## 5.0 Legislation and Planning policies

The Development Plan for the site comprises the *National Planning Policy Framework 2019*; the *National Planning Policy Guidance (2014 – revised 2019)*; the *London Plan 2016*; the *Hillingdon Local Plan Part 1 – Strategic Policies (adopted November 2012)* and the *Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 (draft)*.

### National Policy – National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF)

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's Planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. Central to the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which for decision making means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay.

Chapter 16 of the NPPF pertains to Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment. Paragraph 197 requires that: *The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non- designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.*

When dealing with town centres, Local Planning Authorities should also *promote their long-term vitality and viability – by allowing them to grow and diversify in a way that can respond to rapid changes in the retail and leisure industries, allows a suitable mix of uses (including housing) and reflects their distinctive characters.*

### National Policy - National Planning Practice Guidance 2014 (NPPG)

The National Planning Practice Guidance to accompany the NPPF was launched in 2014 and revised in July 2019. The guidance is designed to make the NPPF clearer and easier to apply to proposals. In this instance, the guidance categories on Historic Environment has been taken into careful consideration.

The Historic Environment section of the National Planning Policy Guidance notes that heritage assets *should be conserved and where appropriate enhanced, in a manner that is consistent with their significance.*

### Regional Policy – the London Plan 2016

The London Plan is strategic in nature and seeks to co-ordinate the development of London's network of town centres.

Policy 7.8 of the plan notes that: *Development should identify, value, conserve, restore, re-use and incorporate heritage assets, where appropriate.*

### Local Policy – The Hillingdon Local Plan Part 1 – Strategic Policies (2012)

Policy BE1 Built Environment requires that: *all new development to improve and maintain the quality of the built environment in order to create successful and sustainable neighbourhoods, where people enjoy living and working.*

Policy HE1 Heritage confers that: *The Council Will Conserve and enhance Hillingdon's distinct and varied environment, its settings and the wider historic landscape, which includes: Locally recognised historic features, such as Areas of Special Local Character and Locally Listed Buildings.*

### Local Policy – The Hillingdon Local Plan Part 2 – (Draft)

The Local Plan Part 2 comprises Development Management Policies, Site Allocations and Designations and Polices Map. Once adopted it will deliver the detail of the strategic policies set out in the *Local Plan Part 1: Strategic Policies (2012)*. Together they will form a comprehensive development strategy for the borough up to 2026. The draft is at an advanced stage and is due to be adopted shortly.

Policy DMHB 1 states that: *Development that has an effect on heritage assets will only be supported where it sustains and enhances the significance of the heritage asset and it makes a positive contribution to the local character and distinctiveness of the area.*

Policy DMHB 4 proposes that: *New development, including alterations and extensions to existing buildings, within a Conservation Area or on its fringes, will be expected to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area. It should sustain and enhance its significance and make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.* To this end, it requires that: *Proposals for new development, including any signage or advertisement, to be of a high quality contextual design. Proposals should exploit opportunities to restore any lost features and/or introduce new ones that would enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.*

Policy DMHB 13 notes in section A that: *New shopfronts and alterations to existing shopfronts should complement the original design, proportions, materials and detailing of the building of which it forms a part and the surrounding street scene*

## 6.0 Planning assessment

This proposal aims to conserve and enhance a heritage asset in a manner consistent with its significance.

The alterations are set out above in the Design Statement.

The proposal goes back to individual letters rather than a single large backlit panel bringing the facade back closer to how it was intended to look when originally designed.

The side hanging sign has a similarly historic / simple look to it and is in the same position where there appears to have been for the former Barclays Bank

## 7.0 Conclusion

In summary we consider that these proposals are entirely acceptable and will ensure that the external appearance of this unit benefits Green Lane.

The new signage is in keeping with the area.

We have demonstrated that the application is compliant with the relevant policies and that it would not have an adverse impact on the amenity, or character of the area.

As such, we consider that it would be entirely acceptable and in accordance with the relevant local planning policies. We therefore respectfully request that Planning Permission for the proposed change of use and minor external modifications be granted.

## 8.0 References

London Borough of Hillingdon Convenience Goods Retail Study Update (2012)

[https://archive.hillingdon.gov.uk/media/21909/Northwood-Town-Centre-Green-Lane-Conservation-Area/pdf/10235\\_Conservation\\_leaflet\\_-\\_Green\\_Lane\\_1.pdf](https://archive.hillingdon.gov.uk/media/21909/Northwood-Town-Centre-Green-Lane-Conservation-Area/pdf/10235_Conservation_leaflet_-_Green_Lane_1.pdf)

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