

COMMITTEE DATE: 20 February 2008

APPLICATION NO: 07/03740/AR **TYPE:** Advertisement Consent

WARD: Abbey

PARISH:

EXPIRY DATE: 7 February 2008

APPLICANT: Gitte Dawson

PROPOSAL: Display of multiple, non-illuminated fibreglass pigs fixed to a steel base either with a pole or fixed directly onto the base in ten different sites for 6 months, including Orange Grove, Ladymead Fountain, 80 and 114 Walcot Street, Bath Abbey, 7 Kingsmead Square, Royal Crescent Green, St. Andrews Green, The Circus and Ring Common Allotments

SITE LOCATION: Street Record, Walcot Street, City Centre, Bath

REASON FOR REPORTING THE APPLICATION TO COMMITTEE

This is a unique proposal which has potentially a wide-ranging impact on the Bath World Heritage Site

DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND APPLICATION

This application relates to fibreglass pigs which are intended to be sited at different locations in and around Bath City Centre from 1st April to 30th September 2008, the pigs measuring 1.5m long by 900mm high, mounted on heavy metal bases which will keep the pigs stable and prevent them from being moved. The pigs would be finished in bright colours and it is envisaged that they would be individually decorated by artists engaged by the sponsors. Brass plaques are intended to be attached to the bases of the pigs to acknowledge the sponsor of the individual pigs.

The plaques would measure 200mm wide by 100mm deep, with some plaques being 150mm square. The plaques would have engraved lettering and a 'King Bladud' logo, and each pig would have one plaque only, fixed to the heavy metal base onto which the pig is fixed.

The pigs are intended to be sited at the following locations:-

- Orange Grove, 1 pig on roundabout
- 78 Walcot Street, 2 pigs on 'Framing Workshop' shop building
- Bath Abbey, 1 pig on pavement close to Rebecca Fountain
- Kingsmead Square, 3 pigs on pavement outside 7 Kingsmead Square
- Royal Crescent, 2 pigs, 1 outside Royal Crescent Hotel and another on Royal Crescent Green
- St Andrews Green, 3 pigs on the Green
- The Circus, pigs would be located on the grassed island in the centre of the Circus, the number of pigs has not yet been decided.
- Ladymead Fountain, Walcot Street, 4 pigs grouped around the fountain
- 114 Walcot Street, 1 pig on pavement outside Richard Hathaway Lighting shop

- Ring Common Allotments, Cow Lane, 1 pig close to entrance to allotments

CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

Highway Development Officer: Referring to the siting of the pigs rather than the sponsorship plaques, confirms that there is no highway objection to the pigs. Points out that one pig at the Royal Crescent has been shown in error as sited on the road carriageway.

Parks Technical Manager: Has been in discussion with the applicant. The Parks Department would need to grant a licence for the Pigs to be sited on Parks land, and they do not need to make representations on this planning application.

Historic Environment Team: No comments have yet been received, but will be reported at the meeting of the Committee.

Bath Preservation Trust: Fully supports the principle of temporary public art installations. Wish to be assured that the method of fixing is not going to damage historic street surfaces or buildings

Local Residents: 38 individuals have written in support of the siting of the pigs, taking the view that they would brighten up the City and could raise money for good causes.

1 resident writes to support the scheme in principle but objects to proposed siting at Ring Common Allotments, as is concerned that the pigs will attract vandals to the allotments.

The Circus Residents Association originally objected to the scheme, on grounds that the pigs were inappropriate for this location, however have now withdrawn their objection.

Messages of support for the scheme have also been received from Councillors Marian McNeir, Neil Butters, Ian Gilchrist and Roger Symonds.

PLANNING ISSUES

Planning History: There have not been any directly similar proposals within the Bath and North East Somerset District. Applications for the placing of sponsor acknowledgement signs on roundabouts within the district were considered by the Committee during 2007, with signs on six roundabouts being approved and two refused. (Application 07/01609/AR and subsequent applications refer).

Planning Policy: BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET LOCAL PLAN (INCLUDING MINERALS AND WASTE POLICIES) - ADOPTED OCTOBER 2007

The following policies are material considerations :-

- BH1 - World Heritage Site
- BH2 - Listed Buildings and their Settings
- BH6 - Conservation Areas
- BH17 - Advertisements

D2 - General Design and Public Realm Considerations
D4 - Townscape Considerations

Visual Amenity within the Conservation Area and World Heritage Site: These structures are advertisements, and as such an assessment of the impact of the advertisements in terms of the impact upon visual amenity and highway safety is required.

The proposed pigs would be large and brightly coloured features which would be sited in prominent positions throughout the City Centre. They would be inappropriate in the historic areas of the city, where the character is created by formal Georgian architecture and world-famous architectural ensembles such as the Royal Crescent and the Circus.

Within these locations these pigs would have an incongruous and inappropriate appearance, which would detract from their architectural character and would 'trivialise' the important locations within which they are set. The proposal therefore has to be seen as damaging to the character of the World Heritage Site and the Bath Conservation Area, and the setting of major Listed Buildings within the City, and thus is damaging to the visual amenities of the area.

Highway Aspects: The siting of the pigs would not be such as to obstruct road traffic or pedestrians using the footway, and no objection is raised on highway safety grounds.

Local Residents: The proposed pigs would not detract from the amenities of any local residents

CONCLUSION

While the Council has no objection to the principle of public art in the district, the siting of the proposed large and brightly coloured pigs would be inappropriate and damaging to the character of the historic areas of the city, causing them to detract from the quality of the Bath World Heritage Site and the Bath Conservation Area, and the setting of important listed buildings.

RECOMMENDATION

REFUSE for the following reasons:

1 The proposed statues would represent inappropriate and intrusive features within the Bath World Heritage Site and the Bath Conservation Area, detracting from the special architectural character and the visual amenities of these areas, contrary to Policies BH1, BH6, BH17, D2 and D4 of the Bath and North East Somerset Local Plan (including minerals and waste policies) adopted 2007

2 The proposed statues would detract from the setting of important listed buildings within the Bath City Centre, contrary to Policy BH2 of the Bath and North East Somerset Local Plan (including minerals and waste policies) adopted 2007.

FOOTNOTE: This decision refers only to the plans dated 18/01/2008 showing the siting of pigs at Orange Grove, 78 Walcot Street, Bath Abbey, Kingsmead Square, Royal

Crescent, St Andrews Green, The Circus, Ladymead Fountain, 114 Walcot Street and Ring Common Allotments.
