

Wayfinding: A discussion document & proposal from RCMRA

Nov 2019

INTRODUCTION

The recent resubmission by Berkeley Homes regarding the parking management addressed the issue of wayfinding and whilst we were pleased to see that they have now adopted virtually all of the recommendations that your Committee made, the design of many of the elements proposed falls short of a logical approach to the look and content. (ref: *RCM Wayfinding Proposal Nov 2019 – Reade Signs*).

The following is proposed as a steer to Berkeley's sign designers. If there is broad agreement to this approach, we intend to invite the sign manufacturers for a briefing meeting to ensure that they understand the structure and complexity of the wayfinding signage at Royal Clarence and produce final artwork that follows good information design practice and leads to signs that will serve us well into the future.

MAINTAINING A SENSE OF PLACE

Currently there are at RCY several sign types with various functions and different typefaces and colours. The decision by Berkeley to now fund wayfinding signage gives us the opportunity to create a more unified approach to signing.

The first step in a more coordinated approach is to define the Royal Clarence colour palette and typeface.

The predominant colours for RCY are brick brown and dark blue/grey and we propose that these two colours should be adopted as the basic colour palette for all signs. (Exact RAL colours to be specified)

The RCY Signs Colour Palette



The brown colour is proposed as the background to wayfinding signs and the dark blue/grey as the base colour for parking signs. Both colours will enable white out typeface to be clearly seen and will not make the signs themselves too intrusive into the RCY environment. The brown colour also has the advantage of being the recognised standard for road signs pointing to heritage and tourist attractions.

The typeface recommended is Trajan Pro Regular, which has a solidity that reflects the monumental nature of the buildings at RCY and is easily legible in upper and lower case.





SIGN DESIGN DISCIPLINE

There are five basic types and associated designs of sign for Royal Clarence that need to be followed.

1. Brown “Heritage” signs that point the way to places of historic interest and other tourist attractions.
2. Signs that show traffic the direction in which to travel once RCY has been entered. These should conform as close as possible to conventional road signs in terms of content but in order to reinforce the sense of place, we propose that they should adopt the RCY brown colour background.
3. Building Location signs. There is an established style for these (white text on dark grey) and these should be followed for new buildings and any additional building signs needed.
4. Orientation signs and associated spaces. These help people on foot or in cars understand the layout of the site and their design should be unique to the “you are here” viewpoint and should only include “need to know” information for orientation purposes.
5. Parking zone and parking management signs.
6. Historic explanation signs. Panels that explain an historic aspect of the site.

The following recommendations are primarily concerned with signs 1-4 above although items 5 and 6 are also touched on as they form part of the wayfinding mix and should use the defined colour palette and typeface.

All existing marketing signs in different colours and typestyles should be removed and replaced with RCY conformant signs where still needed. (for example, drop-off signs which are currently blue metal and branded Royal Clarence Marina).

A BASIC PRINCIPLE OF WAYFINDING

Keep the number of signs to a minimum and let the buildings/spaces explain themselves wherever possible. Too many signs create sign blindness. All existing signs should be interrogated for their value. Are they actually needed?

COMMENTS ON THE LATEST PROPOSALS

The following comments should be reviewed against the current Redesigns proposals which are shown in the attached PDF file. Sheet numbers referred to are in the bottom left of their submission.

Sheets 1 and 2.

The two signs in the main road indicating the turn offs to Royal Clarence are highly appropriate and could only be improved by being placed on the opposite sides of the road.

Sheet 3.

The “Welcome” sign opposite Cooperage Green is again highly appropriate as it will funnel the majority of visitors to RCY and Cooperage Green into the major parking area. Having an additional

parking sign on the forward arrow was considered but this would encourage people to attempt to park in the more restricted area within the yard.

Sheet 4.

The orientation sign within Cooperage Green gates is both inadequate and wrongly sited. The primary function of this sign is to inform drivers where to park and where the commercial units are. The large type is a different font from the previous signs and the wording does not add any information and the proposed graphics are unexplained. A redesign should include the following, using the colour palette and tints of same where needed against a white background.

- Clear black and white layout of the parking spaces with location of disabled and commercial spaces colour keyed.
- The location of commercial unit blocks identified not by name but by unit range i.e. Units 1-7 etc. Consideration could be given to a business name board but this is not considered essential as postal address will be by unit number.
- The location of the entrance arch to RCY indicated.
- The location of residential units 30-77.
- The location of MOD/Fuel Jetty entry.
- The location of any pedestrian path to RCY from the car park. (See below)

The proposed location of the sign means that it not visible to entering traffic and it can be easily missed. A location more angled to the entrance would be more logical.

Cooperage Green Pedestrian Walkway?

Given that people will be parking over a wide area and then making their way through to RCY makes a single pedestrian path problematic in as much as large sections of it will not be used. However, a clear pedestrian path could easily be defined from the entrance arch into Flagstaff Green to the eastern range of commercial units and then turning towards the main gate. This path can easily be defined alongside parking bays in what is currently a drive-through area by yellow lines with pedestrian symbols at every 30 or so ft. Given the amount of ground marking currently proposed, a simple safety marking such as this should not be objected to by GBC. Such a marking will also discourage parking ousted the defined bay areas, which is currently a frequent occurrence.



Sheet 5

The welcome sign is dull and does not celebrate arrival. This archway is an important portal into RCY and deserves to be celebrated. At the same time the sign needs to be highly visible by day and illuminated at night to help draw attention to the portal. In both cases brown heritage signs would not have sufficient impact. The following design is therefore proposed with artwork supplied by Colin Baxter.



Sheet 6.

This “You are here” map is overly complex and includes large areas of the site that have already been traversed, such as Cooperage Green and Weevil Lane. The current presentation works well for a developer selling the site but it does not aid wayfinding with over 50% of content being superfluous information. The whole presentation needs to be simplified to include only the following identified from the entrance onwards.

- Building blocks shown as solid colour with names reversed out
- Areas of green
- The waterfront and the way to it
- Major squares names
- Ceremonial Gate

The location of the sign is also problematic as the sign is placed on the wrong side of the gate in terms of people being able to view the map in relation to what they are able to see. A better position would be on the other side of the gate next to the cross path

Sheet 7

This orientation map shares the same problem of being over complicated and not very useful for people driving into RCY. Again over 50% of the content is of no use. The plan should be redrawn to include only the following

- The road layout clearly marked in a colour.
- Building blocks in a colour with their names reversed out while.
- Visitor parking area and associated disabled spaces.
- Drop off Zone for Waterfront.
- Drop off Zone for Marina.

- Main squares identified.

The sign also needs to be drawn from the perspective of the arriving driver with buildings left and right as viewed.

The location of this sign is also sub-optimal as it may well be regularly blocked by cars dropping off and parking in the area identified. This could lead to double parking at a dangerous junction. As an alternative location the next pull-in bay along would provide ample space for drivers to dwell and orientate themselves, even though this might mean some reversing to access the waterfront drop off zone.

Sheet 8

Strictly speaking this should not restate "Welcome" but given that a long way will have been travelled since passing the first welcome sign in Weevil Lane, it is considered that a repeat of the brown welcome sign is appropriate at this point. The Visitor Parking text need not mention the number of spaces available but should be re-ordered as follows.

North Meadow and Visitor Parking (marked bays only)

Sheet 9

The content and location of this sign at the T junction is incorrect. The order of locations to the right should be Wyatt Court, Flagstaff House then Flagstaff Green.

Salthouse should not appear in the left column but be arrowed straight ahead. The function of these signs is to locate the building, not the parking zone associated with it.

At this junction it should be easy to read the name 'The Salthouse' but this is not the case. The sign for this building needs to be relocated closer to the head of the junction. At the same time the name plaque for 'The Engine House' should be relocated to be visible from the road leading to the T junction.

Sheet 10

Having driven past Flagstaff House (which needs a sign to be clearly displayed on its frontage) one might logically assume that you have entered Flagstaff Green and a sign is superfluous. However, to avoid any confusion it might be an opportunity for one of the oft discussed history panels to provide the clue. If a sign is required then this should be in the brown RCY style.

Sheet 11

This sign should also indicate Granary as being ahead and Mill and Bakery to the left.

An additional Mill building sign should be fixed to the entrance to the Mill Offices.

Consideration was given to having Bakery North and Bakery South included but as the signs for each entrance are relatively close this was not thought necessary.

NM7/Bridge House (under construction)

Signage for Bridge House has not been included in the recently submitted proposals and the following suggestions are made.

The building should be identified in the current building marker style. This should be on the East and West facades so that the building can be identified whilst being passed by traffic. This early identification is important as Bridge House is the first block to be encountered on the bend.

The access road to Bridge House is problematic in that if two-way traffic is allowed it will impose an additional hazard at the already heavily congested access corner into the site. If traffic flowing down Weevil Lane can turn right into the road then this may well become a rat run to avoid corner congestion and traffic calming measures in lower Weevil Lane.

Although the roadway will accommodate two vehicles side by side, a one-way system is recommended with entry from the East end and exit from the West end of the road. If this is adopted then no entry signs would need to be placed at the Weevil Lane end.

Traffic rounding the corner and entering RCY will need to be made aware that the first right turn is the access road to Bridge House. An arrowed sign indicating Bridge House will be needed immediately after the bend.

If the access road is to remain one way in the other direction (flowing from Weevil Lane) a directional sign will be needed in Weevil Lane to indicate the right turn for Bridge House.

In this case a larger sign should be considered showing the right turn for Bridge House and a curving arrow showing the road ahead turning back on itself into RCY. This ahead arrow should be headed *All other traffic*.