



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 January 2021

by D Hartley BA (Hons) MTP MBA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18th January 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/K3605/Z/20/3258801

Lidl, 82 Molesey Road, Hersham, Walton-On-Thames KT12 4RG

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 against a refusal to grant express consent.
 - The appeal is made by Lidl Great Britain Ltd against the decision of Elmbridge Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 2020/1283, dated 3 June 2020, was refused by notice dated 3 August 2020.
 - The advertisement proposed is a flagpole style totem sign.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The Council has drawn my attention to the policies it considers to be relevant to this appeal and I have taken them into account as a material consideration. However, powers under the Regulations to control advertisements may be exercised only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of any material factors. In my determination of this appeal, the Council's policies have not therefore, by themselves, been decisive.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the amenity of the area.

Reasons

4. The proposed flagpole style totem sign would have a maximum height of about 5.9 metres, would be internally illuminated, and its signage component would measure about 3.5 metres by 2.1 metres at a height of approximately 2.4 metres above ground level. The sign would replace an existing ground floor Lidl totem sign which has a total height of about 3.0 metres. It would be positioned at the junction of the Lidl store access road and Molesey Road, adjacent to the single/two storey gable elevations of the Full Moon Chinese Restaurant.
5. The appellant has referred me to examples of other high totem style signs in the area including that at the VW dealership and the Texaco service station. However, these buildings and the associated signage are positioned some distance away from the appeal site, around a turn in Molesey Road and off a roundabout. In contrast, the appeal site is seen in the context of a row of two

storey terraced commercial properties with proportionate fascia height signage as well as two storey residential development on the other side of the Lidl access road. This relatively uniform pattern of low level signage is repeated on the other side of the road to the appeal site including the fascia height signage at Lewthwaite's Wine shop and the ground floor totem sign at Hersham Place.

6. In the context of the above, the proposed flagpole style totem sign would represent a very high, dominant and out of keeping form of advertisement in the immediate locality. When seen against the gable elevations of the Full Moon Chinese Restaurant, it would fail to appear subordinate in scale to the terrace of buildings. As the sign would be illuminated, this would draw even greater attention to what would be harmful development. Whilst I acknowledge that the purpose of the advertisement is for it to be seen by passers-by, in this case the existing advertisement fulfils such a role without it appearing prominent and incongruous within its immediate setting.
7. I acknowledge that in some areas existing trees would screen the sign when viewed by pedestrians, particularly in the summer months when they were in leaf. However, that would not be the case in respect of views of the sign from all pavements on Moseley Road and, in any event, the advertisement would appear as a stark and intrusive addition to this urban environment when seen by motorists approaching the site.
8. For the reasons outlined above, I therefore conclude that the proposal would cause significant harm to the amenity of the area. Consequently, it would not accord with the design and advertisement requirements of policies DM2, DM5 and DM15 of the Elmbridge Local Plan 'Development Management Plan' 2015 or with paragraph 132 of the National Planning Policy Framework which states that *'the quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed'*.

Conclusion

9. I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

D Hartley

INSPECTOR