
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 March 2022 by Ms S Maur

Decision by O S Woodward BA(Hons.) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 April 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/J0350/Z/21/3287220

Site Address: Slough Retail Park, Twinches Lane, Slough SL1 5AL

- 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 Limited against the decision of Slough Borough Council.
 - The application Ref P/06651/107, dated 31 August 2021, was refused by notice dated 4 November 2021.
 - The advertisement proposed is an internally illuminated flagpole sign.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and express consent is granted for the internally illuminated flagpole sign as applied for. The consent is for five years from the date of this decision and is subject to the five standard conditions set out in the Regulations¹, and the following conditions in addition:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 19077 AD_500 Rev A; AT_503 Rev A.
 - 2) The intensity of the illumination of the sign permitted by this consent shall be no greater than 800 candela per square metre.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Procedural Matter

3. The Council has drawn my attention to Development Plan policies it considers pertinent to this appeal and I have taken them into account where relevant. However, powers under the Regulations to control advertisements may be exercised only in the interest of amenity and public safety, taking account of any material factors. The National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance reiterate this approach.

Main Issue

4. The Council has no objection to the proposal on the grounds of public safety. From the evidence before me, and from my observations, I have no reason to

¹ The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended)

disagree with the Council on this matter. Accordingly, the main issue is the effect of the proposed advertisement on the visual amenity of the area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site is located on an area of landscaping between parking spaces on the corner of Slough Retail Park, in front of a cafe building. The site is situated to the northwest of the retail park, on the corner of Twinchies Lane and Bath Road. It is in a prominent location with high levels of traffic along both roads and through the traffic light-controlled junction. The surrounding area is primarily commercial in character. There are a number of advertisements for the units within the retail park including a large totem sign nearby to the proposed sign and five free-standing flagpole signs also nearby, further east on Bath Road, within the application site. To the southwest of the retail park is another Lidl advertisement.
6. The proposal is for an internally illuminated advertisement attached to a steel flagpole. The flag itself would be made of aluminium and predominantly blue and yellow in colour.
7. The proposed advertisement would be seen in the context of the commercial surroundings and significant existing street furniture, such as tall streetlights. Although fairly large, it would still be smaller in both height and bulk than the existing totem sign. The proposed flag element of the advertisement would be made of bright colours. However, the existing totem sign is also multi-coloured, as are the signs to the shops in the retail park. The advert would need to be illuminated at night to notify customers when it is dark. Furthermore, collectively the level of illuminance, size and colours proposed has been permitted on a very similar flagpole sign that is located on the southern end of the retail park². The level of illuminance could be controlled by condition. Advertisements of similar scale, illumination and appearance are therefore an established character of the area.
8. There are a number of existing advertisements in the retail park, as noted above, but the proposed advertisement would be set around the corner from the existing totem pole, fairly distant from the flagpoles, and at the opposite end of the retail park from the similar flagpole sign. It would not, therefore, result in an unacceptably cluttered street scene.
9. Overall, the proposed advertisement would be of sufficiently similar character to the existing signage, and of appropriate appearance in the commercial setting of the retail park, so as not to harm the visual amenity of the area. It therefore accords with Policy EN10 of the Local Plan for Slough 2004 (the LP), which requires that advertisements respect the amenity of the local environment. The Council have referred to Policy EN11 of the of the LP. However, this deals with advertisements on commercial buildings and is not therefore relevant to the appeal scheme.

Conditions

10. The consent is subject to five standard conditions as set out in Schedule 2 of the Regulations. The condition confirming the drawings adds certainty. The condition restricting the illuminance levels is necessary to ensure the

² Advertisement consent Ref P/06651/106, dated 27 October 2021

advertisement would be in-keeping with the character and appearance of the area, and would not harm highway safety.

11. As set out at Part 3, 14(7) of the Regulations, the consent automatically expires after five years. I have not therefore added a specific condition in this regard.

Recommendation

12. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal is allowed.

Ms S Maur

Appeal Planning Officer

Inspector's Decision

13. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is allowed.

O S Woodward

INSPECTOR