



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 July 2022

by Mr C J A Parker BA(Hons) PGCert MA MRTPI MCMI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 2 August 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/P1750/W/21/3289492

Asda, Westmead, Farnborough, GU14 7LT

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Asda Stores Limited against the decision of Rushmoor Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/00074/FULPP, dated 26th January 2021, was refused by notice dated 19th August 2021.
 - The development proposed is described as *'The application is for the construction of new Home Shopping storage areas and associated coldrooms and also the construction of a new click & collect canopy and associated steelworks. The tarmac, lane markings and kerbs will need to be altered to suit the new construction'*.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues are:
 - (i) the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area, and;
 - (ii) on the living conditions of nearby residents in terms of noise and disturbance.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The appeal site is located to the rear of an existing Asda supermarket. It is located adjacent to an existing service area for the supermarket. The site is located within the Farnborough Town Centre. The highway called 'Westmead' is a two-way access road and access route for service vehicles and staff car parking. Along the western edge of Westmead (behind the supermarket), there is a retained area of landscaping, which contains a collection of fairly large trees and grassed areas. Otherwise, the street scene adjacent to the appeal site is largely devoid of natural landscaping, with a visually harsh landscaped rear of shops and parking areas, with living accommodation above on the upper floors opposite the site.
4. The proposal seeks the erection of a canopy as shown on drawing PL-06 'Proposed Click and Collect and Canopy Details'. This would be around 9.490 metres wide, 3.9 metres tall and 6.340 metres deep. This would provide

cover for six collection and waiting bays as shown on the drawing so that customers can collect pre-ordered food and goods. Given its overall size and height and that it would occupy an area currently unencumbered by structures, it would represent an uncharacteristic addition to the street scene. This prominence would be especially prominent at night with proposed illumination shown on drawing PL-06.

5. Moreover, as shown on drawings PL-02 'Existing Site Layout Plan' and PL_07 Rev A 'Proposed Landscaping Plan' to facilitate this the proposal would require the removal of a significant area of the landscaping area on the appeal site between the proposed canopied collection area and the highway. As shown by a cut out of the landscaping area on the drawings. The proposal also shows that the current narrow gap at the proposed exit point would be enlarged, resulting in the loss of a sizeable tree. The loss of a significant area of landscaping would therefore have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area.
6. Whilst the Appellant has suggested that the proposal could result in a net gain of seven trees, I have been provided with little detail as to how these would make a positive contribution to the street scene commiserate with the trees and/or plants that would be lost as part of the proposal. Moreover, it is unclear as to the practical implications arising from the reduction in the area for tree roots and water given the increase in hardstanding sought. Mindful of the duty under s197 of the TCPA, I am uncertain that adequate provision could be made in this case for the preservation or planting of trees. Even were a planning condition imposed, any replacement tree(s) would be unlikely to be of a size to replace those lost, and accordingly the harm I have identified to the character and appearance of the street scene would remain for some time.
7. Accordingly, the proposed development would be contrary to Policies DE1, DE6 and NE3 of the *Rushmoor Local Plan 2019 (RLP)*, which, amongst other aims, seek to ensure that new developments make a positive contribution towards improving the quality of the built environment by ensuring that existing landscaping features are included in the overall design of the scheme. It would also conflict with policies of the *National Planning Policy Framework* including those set out in Paragraph 130, which indicate that planning decisions should ensure that developments are visually attractive as a result of appropriate and effect landscaping.

Living conditions

8. With regard to living conditions, the appeal site is located some distance from nearby residential dwellings. No objections were raised from the Council's Environmental Health or Highways advisers as to the unacceptability of the proposal. The Appellant has submitted a noise survey which concludes that any noise arising from the proposal is likely to be 'imperceptible' at the nearest dwelling. I have little evidence that contradicts this position. Moreover, whilst I acknowledge that the proposal would result in a different type of noise and disturbance compared to that of a service yard, the distances involved mean that noise and disturbance from the proposal is unlikely to be harmful to neighbouring occupiers.
9. As such, I find that there is little evidence before me that the proposal would result in material harm to the living conditions of nearby residential occupiers through noise and disturbance arising from the proposal. Accordingly, the

proposal would accord with part of Policy DE1 of the RLP which seeks to ensure that proposal would not cause harm to existing and/or adjacent users by reason of noise.

Conclusion

10. Whilst I have found in favour of the Appellant on the second main issue, this does not override the harm I have identified in respect of the first main issue. The proposal would not accord with the adopted development plan when considered as a whole and there are no material considerations that indicate a decision otherwise than in accordance with it.
11. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

C Parker

INSPECTOR