



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 March 2023

by Rebecca McAndrew, BA Hons, MSc, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18th May 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/W3330/Z/22/3310390

Land immediately to the north-west of the Nynehead Road/Taunton Road/Torres Vedras Roundabout, Wellington

- 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 Miss Victoria George-Taylor, Lidl Great Britain Ltd, against the decision of Somerset West and Taunton Council.
 - The application Ref 43/22/0047/A, dated 7 April 2022, was refused by notice dated 13 September 2022.
 - The advertisement proposed is a 1 x 6m flagpole style sign.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and express consent is granted for the display of the advertisement 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 Regulations and the following additional conditions:
 - i. The intensity of the illumination of the flagpole style sign permitted by this consent shall be no greater than 440 candela per square metre.
 - ii. Notwithstanding submitted information, the sign permitted by this consent shall only be illuminated during the opening hours of the premises to which it relates.

Procedural Matters

2. The appeal arises from the Council's refusal of a flagpole style sign as part of a split decision in which the Council also granted advertisement consent for other signs at the recently developed and now open Lidl store. I have therefore used the description of proposed development in relation to the single sign included on the Council's Decision Notice, rather than the application form, as this defines the part of the proposal refused consent.
3. I have used the appeal site address included on both the Council's Decision Notice and the Appeal Form in considering this appeal as it is more comprehensive than that included on the planning application form.
4. The position of the proposed flagpole style sign was amended during the course of the planning application. Plans have been submitted as part of the appeal which show both the original and amended locations of the proposed sign. As such, I have considered the appeal on the basis of amended Drawing AD50 Rev C.

Main Issue

5. The Council raised no objection in relation to public safety, subject to conditions. From the information before me, I have no reason to disagree with those findings. Consequently, the main issue is the effect of the proposed flagpole style sign on the visual amenities of the area.

Reasons

6. The proposed internally illuminated flagpole sign is a standard type of advertisement and is similar in design and scale to advertisements which can be found at many supermarkets across the country. It would provide a useful way marker for visitors to the supermarket and improve the legibility of the site.
7. The proposed internally illuminated flagpole sign would sit in a logical position in a landscaped area within the Lidl store site boundary, but adjacent to the entrance route to the supermarket off the roundabout/B3187. Whilst the sign would be visible on this main route into and out of Wellington, it would be set back from the highway and would be viewed in the context of the supermarket site. Moreover, this would be the only freestanding sign located away from the main building so would not give rise to visual clutter.
8. In view of the above, the flagpole sign would not appear overly intrusive or excessive in the streetscene. Consequently, it would not unduly harm the visual amenities of the appeal site or the area, including this main route into Wellington.
9. The proposal therefore meets the requirements of Paragraph 136 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Policies D2 and D3 of the Taunton Deane Adopted Site Allocations and Development Management Plan 2016. Taken together, these seek to protect the character and appearance of the area, including this route into Wellington, from poorly sited and designed advertisements.

Other matters

10. I note concerns regarding potential for anti-social behaviour in the supermarket car park. However, the application before me relates solely to the proposed flagpole style sign which would be unlikely to promote such a problem. Therefore, I attach limited weight to this matter in considering this appeal.

Conditions

11. I impose two conditions in addition to the five standard conditions. Conditions to limit the intensity of the illumination and to restrict the times when the sign is illuminated will safeguard the amenities of the area, including the living conditions of nearby residents.

Conclusion

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

Rebecca McAndrew

INSPECTOR