



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 February 2025

by **J D Westbrook BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28 February 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/W4325/Z/24/3356004

Land at Caldbeck Rd/corner of Welton Rd, Bromborough, Wirral, CH62 3PN

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended) against a refusal to grant express consent.
 - The appeal is made by Alight Media against the decision of Wirral Council.
 - The application Ref is ADV/24/01366.
 - The advertisement proposed is the erection and display of a freestanding 6m x 3m LED illuminated display unit.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed display unit on the visual amenity of the area around the junction of Caldbeck Road and Welton Road.

Reasons

3. The proposed display unit would be sited within a grassed area at the junction of Caldbeck Road and Welton Road, close to the main entrance to the Croft Retail and Leisure Park from New Chester Road (A41). There is a row of commercial units to the north which are separated from the site by a bank of mature trees. There is a supermarket (Lidl) on the opposite side of Caldbeck Road and an open grassed area to the west, across Welton Road and adjoining the A41. The land is currently designated as a Primarily Industrial Area on the Council's Unitary Development Plan (UDP).
4. The unit would be 6 metres wide by 3 metres high and would be supported on poles such that the bottom of the unit would be 2.5 metres above the ground. The display would face west towards the entrance to the industrial area, and would contain static poster images which would be internally illuminated.
5. Caldbeck Road is the entry point to the commercial area within which the appeal site is located. There is a large display unit at the junction with the A41 which advertises businesses in the area, and another smaller unit serving the Lidl store on the opposite corner. Other than these, there are no other large free-standing display units along the road. The road itself is characterised by open landscaped areas along its length creating the effect of a tree-lined boulevard between the retail/commercial park to the north and the trade/business park to the south. The commercial buildings are set well back from the road, behind the landscaped frontages, and are not readily visible when entering the industrial zone.

6. The appellants contend that adverts are controlled with reference to their effect on amenity and public safety only, so the regime is lighter touch than the system for obtaining planning permission. On this basis they contend that there is no requirement to adhere rigidly to the provisions of the development plan. However, development plan policies relating to amenity will still be relevant. In this case, I have not been presented with policies from the Council's adopted Unitary Development Plan (UDP) relating specifically to advertisements, although Policy SH10 indicates that the siting, scale, design and materials of proposals within out-of-centre retail developments should be appropriate to the character of the surrounding area.
7. Policy WP4 of the Council's emerging Local Plan (LP) makes specific reference to the employment area within which the appeal site is located and indicates that development should provide landscaped frontages facing Caldbeck Road and Welton Road. The LP is at an advanced stage of production, and I can afford it moderate weight.
8. The proposed display unit would be set in front of the group of mature trees situated around the north-eastern sector of the junction between Caldbeck Road and Welton Road. This stand of trees forms an effective screen to the large buildings behind and is a prominent feature when entering the industrial area from the A41. It is also a significant element of the tree-lined boulevard formed along Caldbeck Road. The display unit would be a large, uncharacteristic feature, harmful to the otherwise open and undeveloped nature of the landscaped road frontages, which are an important design feature of the entry to the industrial area along Caldbeck Road.
9. In conclusion, I find that the proposed display would be harmful to the visual amenity of the open, landscaped frontages along Caldbeck Road and, in particular, to the stand of mature trees around the junction of Caldbeck Road and Welton Road, which are a prominent element of the landscaping close to the entry point to the industrial area from the A41. As such, the proposal would also conflict with the thrust of Policy SH10 of the UDP and Policy WP4 of the emerging LP. Accordingly, I dismiss the appeal.

J D Westbrook

INSPECTOR