



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 16 May 2025

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

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 May 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/V4250/Z/25/3361587

Parsonage Retail Park, Parsonage Way, Leigh, WN7 5SJ

- 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 Wildstone Estates Limited against the decision of Wigan Council.
 - The application Ref is A/24/97863/ADV.
 - The advertisement proposed is the Installation of two free-standing internally illuminated LED digital poster displays.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposed displays on the visual amenity of the area around Atherleigh Way.

Reasons

3. The proposed displays would be sited within a wide grassed area running alongside a Sainsbury's store on the western side of Atherleigh Way, close to its junction with Leighbrook Way. The grassed area currently has three semi-mature trees within it. The proposed displays would take the place of the middle tree of the three and would be erected in an arrowhead formation with one display unit facing northwards along the road and one facing southwards. The proposal would also involve placing 2 planter style landscaping boxes at the foot of the adverts and the planting of 2 replacement trees, one to the northern end of the grassed area and one to the southern end.
4. There is currently a totem-style display at the northern end of the store, near the road junction, but there are no displays or advertisements along the length of the side wall of the store. There are large letters along the roof of the store at its southern end which spell out the name of Sainsbury's. There are currently no other advertisements or displays along Atherleigh Way in the vicinity of the store on either side of the road.
5. The appellants have made reference to other applications for displays along Atherleigh Way that have been approved by the Council. I note that one such display, further south along the road and opposite to stores in the Parsonage Retail Park, involved the replacement of 4 display boards by 2 new displays. The other application was for 2 display boards on a site on the roadside a little to the south of

the existing Sainsbury's store. This latter application was allowed but was not implemented and permission has now lapsed. This location of this scheme was such that it would have been seen chiefly against a backdrop of the Retail Park car parking area and stores within the park south of the Sainsbury's store.

6. By way of contrast, the current proposal would be sited on a wide, uncluttered landscape strip and would be seen prominently in that context against a plain, largely brick and glazed, side elevation of the Sainsbury's store. A previous application for a similar display was dismissed on appeal (Appeal Ref: APP/V4250/Z/23/3332658). Subsequently, the proposal was amended to include the planters and the planting of two replacement trees, and the appellants contend that this would add visual interest to the area. However, it would still result in a large pair of display units being sited on an otherwise uncluttered strip, which benefits from its simplicity and unobstructed nature, in contrast to the busy and hard, built environment of the car parking area and the commercial units to the south. In addition, the grassed strip outside of the store complements the landscaped area on the opposite side of the road, which includes some mature planting and which has no advertisement displays along its length.
7. Policy CP10 of the Council's Local Plan Core Strategy (CS) indicates that the Council will ensure that, as appropriate, new development respects and acknowledges the character and identity of its locality, in terms of the materials, siting, size, scale and details used, and is integrated effectively with its surroundings.
8. The Council's Advertisement Design Guide (SPG) indicates that large free standing signs can be unsightly if prominent and unduly obtrusive on the street scene, and that further displays are likely to be inappropriate unless it can be shown that they would make a positive contribution to the street scene. The SPG also states that large scale hoardings are not appropriate where they are prominent from main roads and should be limited in order to prevent street clutter.
9. In this case, the proposed displays would be prominent and out of character with the otherwise uncluttered and unobstructed nature of the roadsides along this part of Atherleigh Way. They would not integrate well with their surroundings and, despite the proposed provision of planters and 2 replacement trees, would not represent a positive contribution to the established street scene. On this basis, they would conflict with policy CP10 of the CS and with guidance in the SPG. Accordingly I dismiss the appeal.

J D Westbrook

INSPECTOR