

Our Ref: JM/KN0137/21

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14th October 2021

Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council
Council Offices
The Campus
Welwyn Garden City
Hertfordshire
AL8 6AE

Dear Sir or Madam

**MOORS WALK NEIGHBOURHOOD SHOPPING PARADE, WELWYN
GARDEN CITY, AL7 2BQ
APPLICATION FOR ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT
PLANNING PORTAL REFERENCE: PP – 10307039**

We are instructed by Lidl GB Limited (Lidl) to submit an application for advertisement consent in relation to the above site.

The application seeks advertisement consent for:

“The installation of two internally-illuminated totem signs.”

The application has been submitted via the Planning Portal. In addition to the completed Forms, the application is accompanied by the following:

- Location Plan Signage (Dwg no. PL-01 rev. A); and
- Proposed Totem Signage Plan (Dwg no. PL-02 rev. D).

This letter should be read by Officers in their assessment of the application.

THE PROPOSAL

Totem signage is an important component of Lidl’s advertisement strategy, with such signage being present at the majority of its stores across the UK.

It is proposed to install two totem signs within the curtilage of Moors Walk Neighbourhood Shopping Parade. The first totem will be installed within an area of landscaping adjacent to the vehicular access



to the car park, and the second totem will be installed on the grassed area adjacent to the northernmost row of vehicle parking spaces.

The totems will measure 2.1m (W) x 5.9m (H) x 0.31m (D) and will be identical. Both sides of each totem will comprise two individual signs, with a Lidl logo sign at higher level and a sign consisting of the Council's logo and text stating "Moors Walk Neighbourhood Shopping Parade" underneath. The latter has been reviewed by the Council's Estate Department and is considered to be acceptable.

Each totem will consist of a galvanised steel pole finished in dark grey and the signage elements, noted above, will extend off one side of each pole, similar to a flag on a pole. The Council logo and text signs will be internally-illuminated, as will the Lidl logo signs which will have a maximum illuminance of 580 cd / sq.m. Akin to other stores, the illumination on the Lidl logo signs will be turned-off no later than one hour after the store has closed.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Development Plan for the site comprises the policies of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan, which was adopted in April 2005. The majority of the policies were saved in 2008, following a request to the Secretary of State to save the policies beyond the end of the Plan period (2011).

Saved Policy D1 requires the standard of design in new developments to be of a high quality. New development, including totems, should have regard to the guidance contained in the Supplementary Design Guide (2005).

OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Council adopted its Supplementary Design Guide in February 2005, which provides guidance in relation to advertisements and signage. Section 6 of the Guide supplements saved Policy D1 and explains that all advertisements requiring express consent should:

- be well-designed and sensitively positioned;
- not detract from the character of the street scene;
- not create visual clutter, thereby breaking up the visual rhythm of the street scene;
- not provide a visually intrusive level of illumination; and
- not be a danger to public safety.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was updated in July 2021. The Framework seeks to secure the vitality of town centres and well-designed places. Specifically, paragraph 136 explains that places can suffer when advertisements are poorly designed. They should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts.



DISCUSSION

The totems, as proposed, will be viewed wholly within the context of the Moors Walk Neighbourhood Shopping Parade, given their sensitively chosen position. The structures will serve a clear purpose and will advertise the presence of the Shopping Parade and Lidl store.

The totems will be of an appropriate height and scale, being significantly lower than the three-storey buildings forming the Shopping Parade. Each structure, as proposed, will comprise a flagpole arrangement. Given this and the width (2.1m), height (3.3m) and depth (0.31) of the signage panels on just one side of each pole, the totems will in no way appear visually intrusive or bulky.

The finish to each totem will complement the appearance of the buildings and fascia signs within the Shopping Parade. The Lidl logo will match the logos on the Lidl store and the incorporation of white and grey to the other elements of the structures will harmonise with other aspects of the Parade, such as the white walls and grey piers to the largest of the three-storey buildings.

The totems will contribute to the enhancement of a sense of place and identity for the Moors Walk Neighbourhood Shopping Parade. They will not result in visual clutter, noting the absence of freestanding signage within the Parade where such signage would typically be expected.

The method and level of illumination for the signs on each totem should be considered acceptable from an amenity and public safety perspective. The nearest residential properties to the totems, comprising the apartments above the Lidl store and the adjoining units, will be circa 35m from the nearest structure. This is a considerable distance meaning no impact on local residential amenity will arise from the level of illumination proposed. It should be noted that the illumination on the Lidl logo signs will be turned-off no later than one hour after the store has closed.

By virtue of their scale, form and siting, the totems will not impede upon the movement of pedestrians or cyclists. The totem nearest to the vehicular access to the car park will be set back from the highway and will not obstruct the visibility splay at the junction.

CONCLUSION

The totems, as proposed, are appropriate in terms of their usage, scale and design, and will not cause a public safety hazard, nor will they impact on local residential amenity. The structures comply with the guidance contained in the Supplementary Design Guide (2005) and thus accord with Policy DI of the Welwyn Hatfield District Plan.

Overall, the proposed totems comply with the Development Plan and the application should be considered favourably.



If you have any queries regarding the submission or require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully



Jake McLeod
Consultant
Walsingham Planning

