DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2019/0325 **Valid 31/05/2019**	**UNIT 1 MOORLANDS SHOPPING CENTRE BROOK STREET LEEK**	**PROPOSED "WRAP-AROUND" SIGN TO FRONT/SIDE ELEVATION, HIGH LEVEL SIGNS TO SIDE AND REAR ELEVATIONS AND LOADING BAY SIGN TO SIDE ELEVATION TOGETHER WITH AND INTERNAL WINDOW GRAPHICS AFFIXED TO THE INTERNAL FACE OF THE SHOPFRONT WINDOWS.** **(ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT)**

MAIN ISSUES

- The impact on the character and appearance of the town centre

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The site forms part of a large modern red-brick retail building on the southern edge of the town centre which currently contains a large "Wilko" and Peacocks below it. There is a car park on top of the building. The unit is next to Peacocks and is currently vacant but was a former "Argos" store. The building is on the corner of Brook Street/A53 to the south and Pickwood Road to the east and the unit shopfront faces this road.

PROPOSAL

This is an Advertisement Consent application for new signs for a branch of Iceland which will be occupying the unit. The signs are as follows:

1. An internally illuminated red fascia "Iceland" sign with white lettering placed above the whole width of the shopfront and main entrance. This would have a width of 20.0 metres and a height of approx 1.0 metre, leaving a dark grey strip above where the remaining fascia board would be visible.
2. An internally illuminated red fascia "Iceland" sign with white lettering with a width of 5.84 metres and a height of approx. 1.0 metre placed on the side elevation of the shop-front facing the main road and which would form a "wraparound" sign with the main fascia sign above the main shopfront. A dark grey strip above would also be visible.
3. An internally illuminated red fascia "Iceland" sign with white lettering in the middle of the side elevation of the overall building, facing the main road and which would be placed directly above the existing larger "Wilko" sign. This

would have the same width as the Wilko sign (6.5 metres) but would have a lesser height of 1.6 metres.

4. An internally illuminated red fascia "Iceland" sign with white lettering on the road-end of the rear elevation of the building placed directly below a Wilko sign of equal dimensions (4.0 x 0.75 metres).
5. Two small non-illuminated red "Iceland" wall signs with white lettering either side of the loading bay entrance at lower ground level next to the main road. These would have dimensions of 1.165 x 0.375.

There would also be a number of small visual/picture vinyl signs placed mainly in the widened shop-front. These benefit from "deemed consent" not requiring full Advertisement Consent.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES
Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Adopted 2014)

S01 Spatial Objectives
SS1 Development Principles
SS1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
SS5a Leek Strategy
TCR1 – Development in the Town Centres
DC1 Design Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019)

Sections 5 (Town Centres) and 12 (Design)

Emerging Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan

National Policy Guidance

Paragraph 48 of the newly adopted NPPF states that:

"…decision-takers may also give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

- *the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced the preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);*
- *the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and*
- *the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).*

Local Plan process

The Council agreed to publish the Local Plan Submission Version for representations in February 2018. At this point, the Council agreed that the Local Plan was "sound". Formal representations were then invited from residents,

businesses and other stakeholders to provide them with the opportunity to support or challenge the soundness or legal compliance of the Local Plan. This stage in the process followed three previous public consultations since 2015 which had informed the preparation of the Local Plan alongside a comprehensive evidence base.

In June 2018, the Council subsequently agreed to submit the Local Plan Submission Version to the Secretary of State for examination. An examination in public is ongoing in order to determine whether the Local Plan is sound and legally compliant. Hearing sessions were conducted in October 2018 and the Inspector issued his initial post-hearing advice in January 2019 which set out some actions for the Council and a range of modifications that would be necessary to make the plan sound. The full schedule of modifications is to be determined and will be subject to consultation in due course. The Inspector will then be in position to write his final report. Subject to the findings of the appointed Inspector, the Local Plan can then be adopted by the Council. This will be towards the end of 2019 at the earliest. Upon adoption, the Local Plan will supersede the adopted Core Strategy and become part of the statutory development plan for the District.

In this context, the Council's position on the weight to be given to the policies contained in the Local Plan Submission Version in terms of the three criteria set out in Paragraph 48 of the NPPF is as follows:

- The stage of preparation – the Local Plan is now at an advanced stage of preparation as the Council has submitted it to the SoS for examination
- The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies – this varies depending on the policy in question. The Officer Comments section of this report identifies the level of outstanding objections to each policy and recommends the amount of weight to be given to them at this stage in the process
- The degree of consistency of policies with the NPPF – given that the Council has submitted a Local Plan that it considers to be sound, all policies are deemed to be consistent with the NPPF.

Emerging Policies

The following policies are considered to be relevant to this application:

SS5 Leek Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
TCR1 – Development in the Town Centres

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

There are two other concurrent applications for the proposed Iceland store which include a full planning application for plant and machinery on the roof-top car park directly above the unit (SMD/2019/0326) and a full planning application for shop-front alterations (SMD/2019/0327), the later of which has recently been approved. Before these applications, there have been no recent applications.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 25.7.19
Neighbour consultation period ends: 25.7.19
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

None.

Town / Parish Comments

No comments received.

Severn Trent

As the proposal has minimal impact on the public sewerage system I can advise we have no objections to the proposals and do not require a drainage condition to be applied.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Paragraph 132 of the NPPF identifies that only matters of amenity and public safety should be taken into account when dealing with advertisement consent, taking account of cumulative impacts.

The signs would respect existing signs on the building in terms of scale, positioning and colouring, especially the Wilko signs which the side and rear elevation signs would be placed against. The wraparound main fascia sign makes use of the existing fascia boards placed on the building for the purpose of advertising/signs for the occupiers of the building and would therefore not appear out of keeping with the building.

A proliferation of signs is avoided as the side and rear elevation signs are placed against existing signs of the same colour of width and which would not exceed the size of those signs. The side and rear elevations of the building are already very large and prominent and with large sections of blank wall and therefore the cumulative signage would not create a visually obtrusive signage that would dominate the building or the immediate surrounding area. There are a number of illuminated box signs and this part of the town centre, which is very commercial in nature and does not form a part of the historic Conservation Area and does not harm its setting. The purpose of the additional signage at lower ground level facing the main road is purely to identify the loading bay and these signs are noticeable without being harmfully prominent and are not illuminated.

In terms of public safety, the proposed signs do not raise any concerns, in respect of highway or pedestrian safety.

Conclusion

The proposed signage would not harm the character and appearance of the area, or public safety and would comply with both the Council's Core Strategy policies and the government planning guidance contained in the NPPF.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : APPROVE

Case Officer: Chris Johnston
Recommendation Date: 26.7.19

X 

Signed by: JaneC

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council