DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2017/0445 **Valid 27/07/2017**	**CHURNET WORKS ABBEY GREEN ROAD LEEK**	**ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT FOR FLEXIBLE SIGN SYSTEM** **(ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT)**

MAIN ISSUES

- Amenity; and
- Public safety.

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

This application relates to Unit 3 on the north side of James Brindley Road. The site is positioned on the roundabout that serves Sainsburys Petrol Station, Sainsburys supermarket and The Mulberry Leaves PH. The site falls within Leek Town Development Boundary.

PROPOSAL

Advertisement Consent is sought for the erection of an advertisement that is located on the south east elevation of an industrial building. The sign comprises of a flexible sign system that consists of a silver anodised box and profile printed fascia that measures 8.45m in length and 4.5m in height.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (Adopted 2020)

SS1 Development Principles
SS5 Leek Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph(s) 1 - 17
Section(s) 7

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

There is no planning site history relevant to the determination of this application.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 19.09.2017
Neighbour consultation period ends: N/A
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

No comments received.

Town / Parish Comments

Not unneighbourly.

Staffordshire County Council Highways

No objection.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Policy Context

Policy SS1 of the Local Plan sets out a number of key development principles and states "The Council will expect the development and use of land to contribute positively to the social, economic and environmental improvement of the Staffordshire Moorlands in terms of delivering, in partnership with other agencies and services: (inter alia) a healthy, safe, attractive, active, well-designed and well-maintained environment; development which maintains the locally distinctive character of the Staffordshire Moorlands, its individual towns and villages and their settings.

In accordance with policy DC1, all development shall be well designed and reinforce local distinctiveness by positively contributing to and complementing the special character and heritage of the area in line with the Council's Design Guide SPD. In particular, new development should (inter alia) be of a high quality and add value to the local area, incorporating creativity, detailing and materials appropriate to the character of the area; and be designed to respect the site and its surroundings and promote a positive sense of place and identity through its scale, height, density, layout, siting, landscaping, character and appearance.

Paragraph 126 of the NPPF states that "Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this".

Paragraph 136 of the NPPF comments that:

"The quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed. A separate consent process within the planning system controls the display of advertisements, which should be operated in a way which is simple, efficient and effective. Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts"

Amenity

This application seeks consent for a flexible sign that comprises of a silver anodised box with printed fascia. The signage comprises of white lettering set on a pink backdrop.

With regard to public visual amenity the proposed signage is of very significant proportions, and whilst it is acknowledged that the host building is large, it is considered that the sign dominates the roadside elevation and would form a prominent and incongruous feature within the street scene at this point and wider open vista in which it sits. The site is located on an important gateway into the town itself and is clearly visible from the main road past the site and the road junction giving access into the supermarket development. It is also particularly noticeable when entering the supermarket and associated site from the roundabout.

It is acknowledged that the building to which it relates is set back from the main Macclesfield Road and therefore, the signage, to be effective and functional must attract attention from that road. However, it is considered that the size and prominence of the design proposed is excessive.

The bright pink colour of the background appears particularly incongruous, especially given the size of the sign and the amount of background relative to the lettering and having regard to the light colour of cladding on the building. Had the sign been pink lettering of equivalent size on a white background or individually applied letters the impact would have been much less harmful and more subtle and yet equally functional.

It may be argued that this is a predominantly commercial area, but the scale of development generally maintains the character of an approach to a small market town. Although there is a large supermarket on the site, this is largely hidden from views from the Macclesfield Road which forms the approach to the town. Whilst there is commercial development along the road frontage it is characterised by more traditional brick-built factories and mills, and the Mulberry Leaves pub which is a newly constructed but traditionally designed 2 storey brick building which gives the surrounding development a human scale to reflect the residential development opposite as well as it's wider market town setting. Signage on these buildings is comparatively modest and in keeping with the scale of the buildings and market town character of the area. The application proposal by contrast is 8.45m in length and 4.5m in height which is not modest or human in scale and is more reflective of what would be expected in a major urban retail or industrial park and does not respect or enhance the quality and character of this rural market town.

Other buildings on the site and in the surrounding area, include 2 storey residential development on the other side of the Macclesfield Road and the Mulberry leaves, and even where buildings are larger and commercial in nature, they are mostly traditional in appearance including brick-built mills and factories, which gives them a more proportionate scale.

Given that the area is predominantly commercial in nature, it is not considered that there are any residential amenity concerns arising from the proposal. There are residential properties on the opposite side of the Macclesfield Road, but these are mostly at 90 degrees to the site and given the distance involved no specific residential amenity issues are raised.

Highways

No objection has been received from SCC Highways Section and therefore it is not considered that there are any highway or public safety concerns.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

Overall, the proposed advertisement by virtue of its excessive size, scale and prominent siting on the building, coupled with its bright colour scheme would fail to respect the site and surroundings and would detract from the quality and character of the area at this important gateway location into the town causing harm to visual amenity contrary to policy DC1 of the adopted Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan and the provisions of paragraph 136 of the NPPF. In the absence of any material considerations to indicate otherwise the application is recommended for refusal.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : REFUSE

Case Officer: Lisa Howard
Recommendation Date: 30.07.2021

X

Signed by: Jane Colley Signature

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council