

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2021/0531
Valid 12/08/2021

HALFORDS
BROAD STREET
LEEK

TWO ILLUMINATED FASCIA
SIGNS, ENTRANCE SIGN,
OPENING HOURS SIGN, POST
SIGN AND FOUR NO. A0
POSTER FRAMES.

(ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT)

MAIN ISSUES

- appearance
- visual amenity
- neighbour amenity
- Historic environment – setting of the Leek Conservation Area

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

Single storey retail unit set back from road with parking to front and side. Visually noticeable in the street scene. Other commercial premises adjacent including a vacant former petrol garage to the north east side. Three traditional terraced town houses facing from across the road opposite.

The boundary of the Leek Conservation Area follows the opposite side of the road placing buildings opposite within the Conservation Area.

PROPOSAL

Two illuminated fascia signs, one c.17m along the full front and one c.7m on the NE side elevation, both with single continuous trough light mounted above to direct downwards and inwards on to the signs. Stated illuminance 267 candelas per square metre (cd/m²).

Additionally a pair of A0 poster sized frames for signs are to be mounted within each of the two main front window openings occupying the bays left of the entrance door bay. There would be an 'entrance' sign over the front door and an opening times sign to the side.

An existing free-standing steel column (file photo 0486) known previously to have supported a large projecting Halfords sign and measured by the LPA on site to be 4.5m high is to be refurbished and fitted with two 2m high columnar Toolstation signs 487mm in width attached as a back-to-back pair in a projecting bracket arrangement off the post.

Lighting is proposed only to the fascia signs on the main front and side elevations of the building.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Local Plan (adopted 9th September 2020)

- SS1 Development Principles
- SS5 Leek Area Strategy
- DC1 Design Considerations
- DC2 The Historic Environment
- E1 New Employment Development
- T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework February 2019

Paragraph(s) 1 – 14;

Section(s) 4 – Decision making; 6 – Building a strong and competitive economy; 7 – Ensuring the vitality of town centres; 8 Promoting healthy and safe communities; 11 – Making effective use of land; 12 – Achieving well designed places; 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment; 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Adopted Supplementary Planning Documents/Guidance (SPD/G):

- Space About Dwellings SPG
- Design Principles SPG
- Design Guide SPD adopted 21st February 2018

Local Plan Supporting Evidence Documents:

- Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment (2008)

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

91/00730/OLD erection of illuminated pole sign and non-illuminated fascia sign

Steve Jolly Autos – approved

93/00124/OLD – non-illuminated fascia sign – approved

05/00296/FUL - Certificate of lawfulness for existing use – Midco Paints And Wallpapers – approved

05/00581/ADV Illuminated main fascia and freestanding projecting sign – Halfords – approved main fascia sign only / not the free-standing sign

Condition 3: The surface brightness of the proposed advertisement shall not exceed 600 candelas per square metre and shall not include any intermittent light source, moving features or reflective material.

05/00548/FUL Installation of new entrance screen, new shutters and new fire exit door – Halfords – approved

05/01252/ADV – Non-illuminated projecting sign – Halfords – approved

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 6.9.2021

Neighbour consultation period ends: 3.9.2021

Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

One neighbouring resident objection from a dwelling opposite – concerned that “because we are directly opposite this site, these signs will shine directly into our windows. We had problems when Halfords rented this property, because theirs were too bright too”.

Town / Parish Comments

Leek Town Council – no response received

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

The site is within the Leek Town Development boundary on a long established mixed commercial frontage to the main A53 as it enters the town centre. The site is not within the Town Centre boundary as defined in the Local Plan.

The proposal closely matches previously approved signage arrangements at these premises and in principle the appropriateness of the development must be considered to have been previously established. Nevertheless the specific proposed design details must be considered in terms of appearance in the street scene, neighbour amenity and Conservation Area setting. Particular consideration should be given to any lighting impacts.

Design

In physical design and presence the signage appears reasonably well moderated and does not exceed the scale of previously approved signage at these premises.

Appropriate to the mixed use of the area, including residential dwellings directly opposite and also the Leek Conservation Area, no ‘moving’ or ‘intermittent’ lighting is proposed and no signs would be internally illuminated. The lighting is restricted to projecting troughs mounted above the two fascia wall signs directed downwards and inwards on to the signs.

The free standing columnar post sign to the SW corner of the site would be to the same height (4.5m at its top) and of similar structure to the most recent previous sign but due to reduced horizontal projection of 487mm (rather than 1m recorded on the previous approved plans on file) the sign element may be considered a less intrusive and more suitable structure in terms of appearance and impact than the recent previous structure. The projecting bracket of the previous sign is shown on file as having been 1.8m in length from the top of the 4.5m post whereas the proposal here would be 2m in length (Signage Plans 2 drawing).

Amenity

It is to be noted that the 2005 consent 05/00581/ADV for the previous scheme stipulated a maximum illuminance of 600cd/m² for the lighting. It is not known what the installed lighting levels were but the now proposed scheme specifies a maximum illuminance of 267 candelas per square metre (cd/m²).

The LPA has discussed with the objectors their concerns arising owing to their experience of living opposite the premises under its previous lighting arrangements. From this it is apparent that the issues have principally stemmed from wall mounted flood lighting on the building roof parapet directed outwards to oversail the front car park.

Any permission under this advertisement consent needs to make clear for the avoidance of doubt that it does not extend to other external lighting. The matter should also be considered in the separate pending change of use application SMD/2021/0518.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

Overall this seems an appropriate and proportionate response to the commercial needs and should not result in conflicts with street scene, heritage or neighbour amenity.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : **approve**

Case Officer: Arne Swithenbank

Recommendation Date: 7th October 2021

X 

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council