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Our Ref: 2016-040

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18th January 2017

Dear Sirs

Town & Country Planning Act (1990) (As amended)
Town & Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations (2007)
Application for two totem signs
Leeds Road Retail Park, Leeds Road, Huddersfield, HD1 6PF

Please find enclosed an application, on behalf of Coal Pension Properties Ltd (c/o LaSalle Investment Management Ltd), for advertisement consent for two totem signs (to replace three existing signage totem signs) along the Leeds Road frontage at Leeds Road Retail Park, Huddersfield.

The application is supported by the following documents:

- Application form;
- Planning Statement (set out below) (prepared by NJL Consulting); and
- Drawings pack (prepared by RGP), including:
  - Site Location Plan (10037-X-L05); and
  - Proposed Signage Plan (10037-X-E01 Rev A).

The planning application fee of £110.00 has been paid directly to Kirklees Council.

Site and Surroundings

The two proposed totems are to replace three existing totems located on the Leeds Road frontage at Leeds Road Retail Park, Huddersfield.

Leeds Road Retail Park is to the south and west of Leeds Road. It extends to circa 18,000sqm (gross) with existing tenants including SCS, Wren, B&Q and Maplin. Planning permission has recently been granted for a Burger King and a three unit small 'pod' scheme.

The wider area has a mix of uses, but is largely commercial with retail, offices and industrial uses along Leeds Road and extending back from the main road.

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Although there are residential properties near the retail park, these are either located on the opposite side of the busy Leeds Road or not visible from the proposed totems. In any event, the presence of nearby housing is set within the commercial context of the retail park.

The Proposals

A Site Location Plan and Proposed Signage Plan are enclosed with the application. These plans show the proposed location, height and scale of the proposed totems along with the location of the existing totems to be removed.

The current signage is dated and would benefit from an overall redesign. Additionally, it does not provide adequate signage visibility, along Leeds Road, required by modern retailers. For example, we are aware that potential tenants of the current proposed pod units have considered their own separate totem signage on Leeds Road to provide the required brand prominence to customers.

The intention is to replace the three existing totems (7.00m) with two totems (8.25m). The new totems would be located approximately at the two junctions of Leeds Road and Bradley Mills Road at either end of the retail park, to replace the existing signs in these locations. The current third totem on Leeds Road would be removed. The proposed totems will be set back from the footway and do not protrude over the carriageway or inhibit visibility splays along Leeds Road.

Pre-application discussions

The proposed totems have been discussed with officers at Kirklees Council. Following the pre-application discussions the totem height was reduced from 9.9m to 8.25m to ensure the totems better relate to the scale of development at the retail park and reflect the height of nearby totem signage.

Planning Policy Context

The Development Plan for the site comprises 'Saved' policies of the out of date Kirklees Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (1999). The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and associated Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) are material considerations.

The NPPF is clear that the Development Plan can only be considered up to date where the policy approach is consistent with the NPPF. The UDP is out of date, policies concerning applications for advertisement have been deleted by the Council or superseded by the NPPF. The NPPF should therefore take precedent.

Paragraph 67 of the NPPF is clear that Local Planning Authority control over advertisements should be *'efficient, effective and simple in concept and operation'*, so that only those advertisements which have an appreciable impact on the building or their surroundings are subject to a detailed assessment. Importantly, it states that *'advertisements should only be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety'*.

Consideration of *amenity* and *public safety* is set out in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) which supports the NPPF. The PPG provides various notes on the consideration of both matters, but is clear that *there are less likely to be road safety* (and amenity) *problems if the advertisement is on a site within a commercial or industrial locality* (Paragraph ID: 18b-067-20140306).

The Case for Development

The site is an existing retail park within a largely commercial area along the busy A62 (Leeds Road) to the north of Huddersfield Town Centre. Neither the site nor surrounding area are particularly sensitive in design terms.

The proposed totems are required as the existing totems are dated and do not provide necessary signage visibility along Leeds Road. New totems are needed to display the presence of the retail park and tenants, to attract customers. Providing new comprehensive totems, which include signage zones for the retail park tenants, avoids the potential for tenants to seek ad-hoc signage along Leeds Road.

Although the proposed totems (at circa 9m) are slightly larger than the existing totems (circa 7m) there is an overall net reduction in signage from three totems to two. The proposed rationalises and improves the signage provision at the retail park.

Safety

The proposed replace existing totems on Leeds Road and, as noted above, results in a net reduction in signage. Although the proposed totems are larger than the existing, the overall totem height is not excessive and mirrors the scale of development at Leeds Road. The scale, design and illumination are appropriate will not distract road users or pedestrians.

The totems do not impact on visibility splays or sight lines along Leeds Road, similarly they do not protrude over the highway or footpath. Illumination is appropriate for the site and will not affect the operation or visibility of existing traffic signals at the Leeds Road and Bradley Mills Road junctions.

The proposed totems do not present any issues in respect of safety for either pedestrians or users of the adjacent highway (Leeds Road).

Amenity

Replacement signage will avoid an ad-hoc tenant led approach to signage along the retail park frontage to Leeds Road. Such an approach would be of no benefit to the Local Authority, highway users, nearby residents or the retail park owners. There is clear merits to our approach in providing comprehensive new totem signage.

The advertisements are compatible with the surroundings and reflect the local context. The design, layout and scale of the advertisements has been considered to reflect the retail park context. On all three points (design, layout and scale), the totems are proportionate to the existing signage at the retail park.

Of note, the proposals replace two of the three existing totems, with the third existing totem being removed from the site. As noted above, there is a net reduction in signage.

Illumination method and level is appropriate in the context of the retail park and, as per the existing totems, will be controlled to minimise light spillage or glare. Although residential properties are located on the opposite side of Leeds Road, the totems will not impact on residential amenity.

In summary, the advertisements accord with the NPPF.

Conclusion

The proposed two totems will replace three existing totems at Leeds Road Retail Park. Replacement signs are required to provide an improved and comprehensive totem package at the retail park. The retail park is not a sensitive location for development.

The proposed totems are an appropriate addition to a modern purpose built retail park in an out of centre location. The proposed advertisements accord with the Development Plan and the provisions of the Framework and therefore, consent should be granted.

We trust that you have sufficient information to validate the application and will be in contact shortly.

Yours faithfully,

Nick Pleasant
Senior Consultant
For and on behalf of NJL Consulting