Expiry Date - 07/02/2024

Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/1716/23 Recommendation – APPROVE

Site: Unit 2 To 3 Downlands Retail Park Lyons Way Worthing

Proposal: Internally illuminated 1 no. Fascia Sign and 1 no. internally illuminated Poster Display Unit

Date of site visit: 22/01/2024

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N

Site and Surroundings

The application relates to retail units 2 and 3 located within Downloads Retail Park which is accessed off Lyons Way to the west and close to the major trunk road Sompting By-Pass (A27) to the south. Units 2 and 3 have recently been amalgamated and refurbished (under AWDM/2026/22), formerly Bensons for beds (unit 2) and halfords (unit 3). At time of site visit the branding for Halfords had been stripped from the fascia sign whilst Bensons for beds was still in-situ. The adjacent unit (1) to the west is occupied by currys and the unit (4) to the east is occupied by B&Q, of which is a comparatively larger unit to 1-3. Fronting the row of units is a large stretch of car park which spans virtually the entire length of Lyons Way between the units and A27 to the south, meaning the units are readily visible to adjacent roads. The shopfronts to the row of units 1-3 have a distinctive timber clad fascia with the bottom section glazed and a grille design to top section where the fascia signs are in-situ. Alterations to the shopfront under permission AWDM/2026/22 involved the creation of a new single shopfront with canopy and reconfigured timber fascia and alterations.

Proposal

Lidl wish to display adverts which would comprise a fascia sign together with a poster display unit. The fascia sign would be displayed to the west of the fascia whilst the display unit would be at ground level to the footpath beneath the fascia sign. Both signs would be static and internally illuminated.

The fascia sign would measure 2.5m high, 2.5m wide, 0.31m deep, and at a height of 4m from ground level. The maximum height of individual letters or symbols would be 0.77m. The fascia sign would be Lidl’s corporate branding which comprises a blue square backdrop and blue and red text on a yellow circle with red outer ring background.

The poster display unit would be free standing and would measure 2.12m high, 1.7m wide, 0.07m deep, and at a height of 0.95m from ground level to base. The frame to the display unit would be constructed of stainless steel.

Relevant Planning History:

Approval at the application property for external alterations, amalgamation and refurbishment of existing Units 2 & 3, including associated works to the car park including new trolley bay and servicing areas and widening of use to enable the sale of food and drinks, and associated non-food goods from the Unit under AWDM/2026/22, decision issued 20 Sep 2023. Previous approval for internally illuminated fascia sign at unit 2 under AWDM/0763/14, decision issued 16 Jul 2014 and installation of one internally illuminated aluminium box sign at unit 3 under 08/0949/ADV, decision issued 10 Nov 2008.

Most recent approval at the adjacent unit 1 for installation of one internally illuminated box sign and various other non-illuminated signs under AWDM/1973/21, decision issued 03 Mar 2022.

Most recent approval at the adjacent unit 4 for proposed replacement illuminated fascia sign, new non-illuminated entrance sign and various new non-illuminated customer information signs under AWDM/1940/19, decision issued 28 Feb 2020.

Consultations:

South Downs National Park Authority: No comment.

Representations: None received.

Relevant Planning Policies

National Planning Policy Framework (Revised December 2023)
National Planning Practice Guidance

Worthing Local Plan (2023) 2020-2036
SP1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development)
DM5 (Quality of the Built Environment)
DM6 (Public Realm)

Planning Assessment

Principle

There is no objection in principle to the display of advertisements which will be considered on their effect on visual amenity and public safety.

Visual Amenity

The site is viewed in the context of the surrounding area located within Downlands Retail Park in a busy commercial area to the north of the A27. Illuminated signage exists at the adjacent premises' and also to the application property (units 2 and 3) prior to the surrender of the units. The large car park which front the 4 units extends to the major trunk road creating an open space between. The signage to these units are therefore visible to the public realm of adjacent highways.

The proposed main fascia sign (Lidl) would be situated to the west side of the upper grille section to the shopfront which is considered appropriate in view that it would match the level of established fascia signs to the units, respecting the character and appearance of the units. The fascia sign in isolation is considered to be of modest scale and is well proportioned in the context of the unit; it would not be dominant and would be sensitive to its surroundings. The sign would actually enhance the unit's street scene appeal as it would replace redundant and 'tired' signage. The poster display unit would only be visible to Lyons Way and would result in no harm by virtue of its modest scale at ground level which assimilates the shopfront. The proposed signage would not appear out of keeping in the context of the retail park nor appear visually intrusive in the wider locality.

Public Safety

The factors relevant to public safety include such matters as the safety of persons using any highway, and or whether the display of the advertisement in question is likely to obscure, or hinder the ready interpretation of any traffic sign.

The proposed signage would not hinder or obstruct pedestrians or vehicles using the building or car park or impinge on the public highway by virtue of the advertisements siting at a height above pedestrian height level and the similar nature of the advertisement to what previously existed to the shopfront. The footpath between the shopfront and car park is deep enough to accommodate the 0.07m deep display unit without adversely affecting public safety. The proposed signage would not cause a distraction to highway traffic using the adjacent roads by virtue of the distance between and acceptable luminance levels. There are no implications arising from the proposal from a public or highway safety perspective.

Recommendation

APPROVE subject to Standard Conditions 1-6 and

7. Approved Plans

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation? N

1. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Case Officer:	Jason Albon	Date: 06/02/2024
Authorised by:	Peter Barnett	Date: 6 February 2024