

Delegated Report

Application No: 20220682

Location: Wickes Building Supplies Ltd, Stuart Road, Gravesend DA11 0BZ

Description: Application for consent for 2 no. Illuminated building signs, 1 no. set of Glazing Click&Collect Graphics, 1 no. totem sign part illuminated, 1 no. post signs and 2 no. Product signs non-illuminated

Applicant: Wickes

Submitted Documents/Plans

The application comprises the following documents and plans:

OS Plan (revised)
Photos of existing
Drawing no. 82690 (freestander proposed elevations)
Drawing no. 82688 (flexface chevron proposed elevations)
Drawing no. 82675 – B (Wickes sign 1)
Drawing no. 71041-A (section of main sign)
Drawing no. 81658 (section of main sign)
Drawing no. P2655 (section for letters)
Drawing no. 82676 (totem)

Relevant Planning History

20220515	Removal of existing entrance canopy and replace with Trimapanal cladded entrance feature with installation of new showroom window, covered trolley park, car park alterations and bollards. Removal of outdoor projects centre.	Permitted	11.07.2022
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Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014):

- CS11 - Transport
- CS19 - Design & Development Principles

Paragraph 33 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) sets out those policies within adopted local plans should be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every five years, and should then be updated as necessary. Such reviews are also a legal requirement

as set out in Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) England Regulations 2012.

The Council undertook such a review in September 2019 and The review found that the adopted Local Plan Core Strategy is in need of a partial review in terms of Policy CS02 due to the increased need for housing since the Local Plan Core Strategy was adopted and the need to ensure a sufficient land supply exists to meet this need. Whilst saved policies from the Local Plan 1st Review (1994) generally conform with the National Planning Policy Framework (2021), the Council will also seek to replace these saved policies via the emerging Local Plan.

Saved Policies in the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (November 1994):

- TC8 – Advertisement Consent

Other material considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development
- Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- SPG3 – Advertisement Control policy Guidelines (2020)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Highway Development Management Officer

The Institution of Lighting Professionals, Professional Lighting Guide 05 suggests that signs over 10m² should have a maximum luminance of 300cd/m² for suburban or urban areas. These proposals comply with the guide so I have no objections in terms of lighting levels.

I do have concerns about the small directional sign located by the roundabout at the north-west corner of the property, the use of an arrow at this particular location could cause driver confusion to the detriment of highway safety. The sign will be partially hidden by existing direction signs and partially or totally by vehicles waiting to join the roundabout. This means it may be sighted late by any approaching driver who could respond inappropriately and drive on the wrong side of the traffic island on Thames Way. It would be better to relocate this sign further east along Thames Way, possibly reoriented with an ahead arrow. Although it would require some vegetation to be trimmed and maintained so the sign is not obscured.



Photo Impression

Neighbouring properties

The application was advertised by site notice and individual letters to 145 neighbouring properties. One letter of representation has been received raising no objections but making the following points:

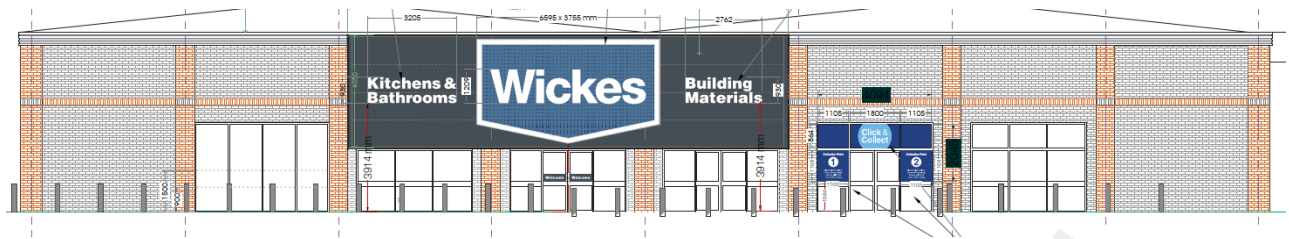
- The need for illumination and proximity to bedroom and living room windows
- Already lorries arrive at 5am onwards causing noise
- Barrier is lifted at 6.30am and customers arrive at 7am causing more noise

Analysis

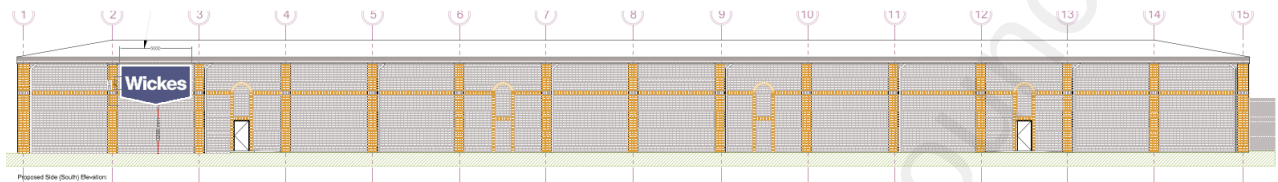
Proposal

Application for consent for 2 no. Illuminated building signs, 1 no. set of Glazing Click&Collect Graphics, 1 no. totem sign part illuminated, 1 no. post sign and 2 no. Product signs non-illuminated.

The two illuminated buildings signs are the one to the front:

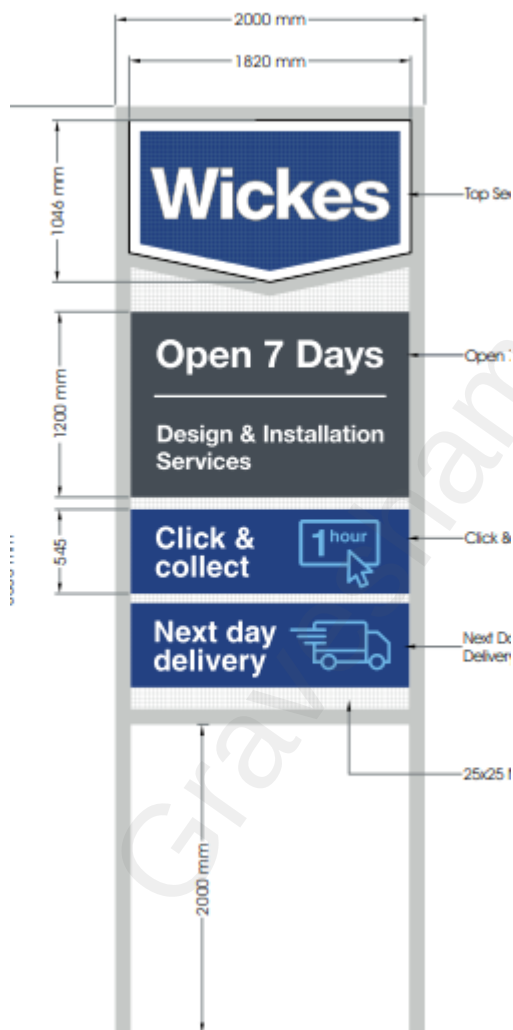


And the one to the side:



The click and collect sign and non-illuminated product signs ('Kitchens and Bathrooms' and 'Building Materials') are to the front.

The totem sign:



The post sign is double sided and non-illuminated:



Analysis

Paragraph 136 of the NPPF (2021) sets out that poorly sited and designed advertisements can have a negative impact on the quality and character of an area and that advertisements should be subject only to control in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts.

The local interpretation of this policy approach is set out in Saved Policy TC8 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review. This policy sets out that applications for advertisement consent will be determined with reference to the adopted policy guidelines for advertisement control and that if displays are detrimental to public safety or to amenity, they will be resisted.

As such the main issues in the determination of this application are whether it is acceptable in principle to have illuminated and non-illuminated advertisements at the application site, and if so whether the proposed advertisements would be appropriate in public safety, amenity terms and highway safety.

Amenity

Advertisements are an important part of the local scene. Well-designed advertisements can add brightness and bustle to commercial areas. However, cluttered, poorly designed, overlarge or brightly lit advertisements can have an adverse effect on the environment

The application site is located within the urban area where the principle of development is acceptable.

Policy CS19 states new development will be visually attractive, fit for purpose and locally distinctive. It will conserve and enhance the character of the local built, historic and natural environment, integrate well with the surrounding local area and meet anti-crime standards.

The Borough Council is very concerned to ensure that the environment generally is improved by achieving a good standard of design in new development.

The urban areas of Gravesend and Northfleet are areas of varied land uses, including the borough's main industrial areas, open spaces and schools, together with mixed-use areas of shops, offices and houses around the edge of Gravesend town centre. Commercial requirements have to be balanced against the need to protect the amenity of residents and open spaces.

Policy 4 - Advertisement displays in other parts of the urban area of Gravesend and Northfleet will generally be acceptable on business premises, if they relate to the trade or activity carried on in the premises. Other advertisements will be considered on their individual merits and may be acceptable if they are viewed against a commercial background and, in the case of illuminated advertisements, are adequately screened from residential property. In this case the advertisements replace old advertisements on a site with an already established commercial use:



The above picture shows the current signage which has become dated and vandalised. Various alterations to the site have been approved under planning reference 20220515 (removal of existing entrance canopy and replace with Trimapanal cladded entrance feature with installation of new showroom window, covered trolley park, car park alterations and bollards. Removal of outdoor projects centre) which will tidy up the site. The proposed signage will replace all the existing signage. The front signs will be coherent and focussed to the middle of the frontage of the building as opposed to being spread out as it is currently. The side sign will be simple. The totem sign will replace the existing totem. The post sign will be located to the entrance and will be double sided. This will also replace an existing sign. The click&collect sign will be located to the front of the building within the site and is modest in size.

The proposed signage is considered to improve the appearance of the site. The number of signs are not increasing and therefore will not result in visual clutter.

Policy 7 - Advertisement displays will be expected to comply with the following criteria – they should be sympathetic to the appearance of the building or land on which they are displayed and should not be an over-intrusive feature in the street-scene or locality; they should not cause or add to an impression of clutter on a building or other land.

The proposed plans show signs that are sympathetic to the building and the land upon which they are to be located. They replace existing signs and therefore will not be overly intrusive in the street scene.

It is noted that an objection was received with regards to illumination and the impact on neighbouring properties. The nearest residential building is approx. 50m from the front elevation sign. The level of illumination complies with the Institution of Lighting Professionals, Professional Lighting Guide 05 and therefore no objections are raised.

Public Safety

Policy 8 - Advertisements should not obstruct visibility, interfere with the interpretation of road signs or traffic signals, or distract the attention of drivers. Concerns were raised with regards to the directional sign to be located on the West Street/Stuart Road roundabout and this was subsequently removed from the application. The remainder of the signs raise no concerns with regards to public safety.

Recommendation:

Permit

See draft Decision

Case Officer: AW	Team Leader: Richard Hart
Signed: 	Signed: R Hart
Dated: 24 August 2022	Dated: 24th August 2022