

REPORT FOR NORTHERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	28 January 2015
Application Number	14/09316/ADV
Site Address	Whychurch Roundabout Malmesbury Wiltshire
Proposal	4 free standing non illuminated sponsorship signs
Applicant	Wiltshire Council
Town/Parish Council	MALMESBURY
Ward	MALMESBURY- Cllr Killane
Grid Ref	394004 187996
Type of application	Full Planning
Case Officer	James Taylor

Reason for the application being considered by Committee

This is a Wiltshire Council application and objections have been received; as such under the terms of the constitution the application must be referred to committee.

1. Purpose of Report

To recommend that Advertisement Consent be GRANTED subject to conditions.

2. Report Summary

This report sets out that this is an application for the erection of 4 non-illuminated advertisements on the Whychurch Roundabout to the north of Malmesbury, Wiltshire; that the material considerations are public amenity and public safety only; that the Parish Council objects and that 2 public letters of objection have been received; and that your officers are recommending the application for consent.

3. Site Description

The application site is a 4 junction roundabout on the A429 on the northern side of Malmesbury, Wiltshire. It is the junction of the A429 and the B4040. The roundabout is landscaped with grass and a central area planted to trees. It is characterised in part by highway signage including illuminated chevron signs at each junction.

The immediate surroundings are landscaped highway verges laid to grass with some trees. This area is characterised in part by highway signage and furniture. Other unofficial signage was noted upon site inspection. Beyond this environment there are residential properties,

Grade II listed buildings to the south west and a petrol station to the north with its associated advertisements.

4. Planning History

None

5. The Proposal

This is a proposal for 4 sponsorship signs on a roundabout on the A429 on the northern side of Malmesbury, Wiltshire. The signs would be sited adjacent to the highway chevron signs and be approximately 0.3 square metres in area; being 300mm in height and 1 metre in length. They would be 375mm above the ground so having an overall height of circa 675mm. The signs would be non-illuminated. The final details of the signs wording and colour is unknown.

This application is one of a number of such applications made by Wiltshire across the County in order to generate income for the Council. Wiltshire Council has come to an agreement with a firm whereby they will conduct the whole sales process and the income generated will be split on a 50/50 basis between them and Wiltshire Council. The money is not intended to necessarily improve the maintenance of each roundabout, but if there are any additional costs incurred in keeping the roundabout to the same level of maintenance- for instance an increase in costs due to the signs causing an obstruction to the Balfour Beatty technicians, this will be absorbed from the income generated.

6. Local Planning Policy

It is anticipated that the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) will be made available for and adopted at the earliest convenient date in 2015. At that time the WCS will be afforded 'Full Weight' in planning terms. In the light of its imminent adoption, it is Wiltshire Council's policy that for the purposes of delegated and committee reports "very significant weight" must be accorded to the Emerging Core Strategy.

North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011 Policy BD9 (local plan)

Emerging Wiltshire Core Strategy Policy CP57 (eWCS)

Draft Malmesbury Neighbourhood Plan

National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (NPPF)

National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

7. Summary of consultation responses

Malmesbury Town Council: Objection which may be summarised as:

"The signs detract from the visual amenity of this location, especially the entrance to Malmesbury down the ancient Holloway. Concern about what further revenue generating signage might be proposed here."

Highways: No objection.

8. Publicity

The application was advertised by way of a site notice. The public consultation raised 2 letters of objection:

- Site is a prominent entry point;
- Create a distraction and restrict visibility to the detriment of highway safety – there are already directional arrow signs;
- Cumulative impact with other signs at entrance to ancient town;
- Neighbourhood Plan lays emphasis on quality of the environs; and
- Poles are not suitable in this countryside location.

9. Planning Considerations

Principle of development.

Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 require that the determination of planning applications must be made in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The local plan policy BD9 states:

“Permission will be granted for signs and advertisements provided:

- i) They would not prejudice public safety;*
- ii) They are suitable in size, siting and design for both the building and/or the immediate locality; and*
- iii) Cumulatively with existing and other proposed signs and advertisements, they do not affect the visual amenity in the locality.”*

The emerging Wiltshire Core Strategy Policy CP57 states:

“Applications for new development must be accompanied by appropriate information to demonstrate how the proposal will make a positive contribution to the character of Wiltshire through.....the sensitive design of advertisements and signage, which are appropriate and sympathetic to their local setting by means of scale, design, lighting and materials”.

The relevant national policy position on adverts is set out at paragraph 67 of the NPPF which states:

“Poorly placed advertisements can have a negative impact on the appearance of the built and natural environment. Control over outdoor advertisements should be efficient, effective and simple in concept and operation. Only those advertisements which will clearly have an appreciable impact on a building or on their surroundings should be subject to the local planning authority’s detailed assessment. Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts.”

In principle the erection of signage is acceptable and it is the detailed matters of amenity and public safety that require further consideration.

Public amenity

The site is within a designated Area of Special Advertisement Control; which is a long standing designation that has not be reviewed and covers virtually all rural and semi-rural locations in Wiltshire. Only very limited weight if any can be attached to this consideration and it is not of significant concern.

It is noted that there are Grade II listed buildings to the south west. However they are relative large distance from the proposals and not well related to the application site. Given the scale, siting and non-illuminated nature of the signs then it is assessed that no harm would occur to these designated heritage assets.

Whilst the signage of the petrol filling station is noted there is no other permanent signage in the immediate locality other than the necessary highway signs and furniture. There would be no cumulative impact with other signage on the area's amenity.

The proposed signs would not cause significant harm to the amenity of the area including the cultural and heritage interests of the listed buildings and their settings.

Public safety

The application site is located on a road junction that includes A-classified roads on the northern periphery of the town. The signs are considered to be relatively discrete and modest in size so as to avoid causing any significant distraction to drivers or pedestrians that are behaving in a reasonable fashion. There would be no illumination.

Whilst the signage of the petrol filling station is noted there is no other permanent signage in the immediate locality other than the necessary highway signs and furniture. There would be no cumulative impact with other signage on public safety.

Moreover it is noted that the highway officer raises no objection to the proposals; and given this the proposed signs would not cause significant harm to the public safety including the highways.

10. Conclusion

Whilst the public objection and the Parish Council objections are noted; it is assessed that the proposals would cause no harm to the relevant considerations of amenity and public safety. As such the application must be recommended for consent.

RECOMMENDATION

To GRANT Advertisement consent subject to the following planning condition:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Location plan received on 26 September 2014; Block Plan received on 26 September 2014; and Sign Spec received on 26 September 2014.

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning

