

DELEGATED

Report to Planning Committee

9 September 2026

Report of Director of Regeneration and Inclusive Growth

26/1070/ADV

Lidl , Billingham Road, Norton

Expiry Date: 11 August 2026

Extension of Time Date: 9 September 2026

Summary

Retrospective advertisement consent is sought for 13 no non illuminated pole mounted signs and 2no non illuminated wall mounted signs.

There have been a number of objections to the application from the wider area of Stockton and also from a SBC Councillor.

The application has been assessed in full against material planning considerations and there are no adverse impacts on the amenity of the surrounding area or implications for highway and pedestrian safety that would warrant refusal of the application.

The application is recommended for approval with conditions.

Recommendation(s)

That advertisement consent 26/1070/ADV be Approved with Conditions subject to the following conditions and informatives;

01 Time Limit

The permission hereby granted for display of the proposed advertisement shall expire FIVE years from the date of this notice.

Reason: As is required by part 3 (para 16(2)c) of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007.

02 Approved Plans

The development hereby approved shall be in accordance with the following approved plan(s);

Plan Reference Number	Date Received
08237-ZZ-XX-DR-A-900001	16 June 2026
08237 ZZ-XX-DR-A-990003 P2	21 August 2026

Reason: To define the consent.

03 Standard Conditions

Any advertisement displayed, and any site used for the display of advertisements shall be;

a) Maintained in a clean and tidy condition to the reasonable satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

- b) Any structure or hoarding erected or used principally for the purpose of displaying advertisements shall be maintained in a safe condition.
- c) Where an advertisement is required under these Regulations to be removed, the removal shall be carried out to the reasonable satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.
- d) No advertisement is to be displayed without the permission of the owner of the site or any other person with an interest in the site entitled to grant permission.
- e) No advertisement shall be sited or displayed so as to obscure, or hinder the ready interpretation of, any road traffic sign, railway signal or aid to navigation by water or air, or so as otherwise to render hazardous the use of any highway, railway, waterway (including and coastal waters) or aerodrome (civil or military).

Reason: Standard Conditions imposed by the Regulations

Informative Reason for Planning Approval

Informative: Working Practices

The Local Planning Authority found the submitted details satisfactory subject to the imposition of appropriate planning conditions and has worked in a positive and proactive manner in dealing with the planning application.

Site and Surroundings

1. The application site is the Lidl Store on Billingham Road in Norton. The site can be accessed from Billingham Road and also from the High Street in Norton.
2. Norton Conservation Area is to the south and west, with the entrance falling in the boundaries. There are a number of listed buildings to the south and southeast and Norton Medical Centre is to the north.
3. The Store backs onto Billingham Road and there is landscaping alongside the boundary to the west.

Proposal

4. The application seeks retrospective advert consent for the erection of non-illuminated advert signs located within the private car park of the adjacent food store. There signage relates to controls of a private car park.
5. The description was for 11 pole mounted signs but the ones in the centre of the car park are double sided so for accuracy the description was changed to 13 signs. The plans also showed two signs which were not erected so these have been removed from the drawings. Permission is also sought for 2 wall mounted signs.
6. Advertisement consent is required as the signs are 80cm x 60cm (0.48 Square metres). Deemed consent would exist for signs upto 0.3 square metre in area (eg approx. 60cm x 50cm).

Consultations

7. Consultees were notified and the following comments were received.
8. Highways Transport & Design Manager

Highways Comments: The proposed 11no. Non illuminated pole mounted signs and 2no. Non illuminated wall mounted signs are acceptable; no highway objections are raised.

9. Councillor Barry Woodhouse

I wish to object to the above application on the following grounds

- As I understand it advertisements of more than 0.5m area require planning permission and to erect the signs mentioned without permission may be an offence
- The signs and cameras are in a conservation area of Norton although clear signage is required by law there appears to be a significant over provision
- The cameras appear to be placed at an excessive height which again appears out of character in the conservation area
- The restrictions placed upon the time limits may both force parking elsewhere and damage the trading possibilities of other retailers in this historic area
- The layout of both signs and cameras do in my opinion damage the amenity of the area, are visually intrusive and should require at least a reduction in provision
- I would therefore ask that refusal which is sometimes difficult or at least not be determined further investigations are undertaken into the erection and placing of equipment by companies by either officers and or members of this Council

10. Historic Buildings Officer

No comments received

Publicity

11. Neighbours were notified by individual letters. 18 objections have been received across both applications from residents in the wider Stockton area and a summary of the comments received is below.

- Concerns over the company and their practices
- Concerns this is a retrospective application
- Visual Clutters from the camera and signs
- Concerns about privacy, surveillance and the capture of images beyond the private car park.
- Impact on current outstanding parking charges that have been issued
- Concerns they have not paid for the applications

Planning Policy Considerations

12. Where an adopted or approved development plan contains relevant policies, Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that an application for planning permissions shall be determined in accordance with the Development Plan(s) for the area, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this case the relevant Development Plan is the Stockton on Tees Borough Council Local Plan 2019.
13. Section 143 of the Localism Act came into force on the 15 January 2012 and requires the Local Planning Authority to take local finance considerations into account, this section s70(2) Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended requires in dealing with such an application the authority shall have regard to a) the provisions of the development plan, so far as material to the application, b) any local finance

considerations, so far as material to the application and c) any other material considerations.

National Planning Policy Framework

14. The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, by managing the use and development of land in the long-term public interest. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. These are economic social and environmental objectives (Paragraph 17).
15. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The national decision-making policies in the Framework are a material consideration in making decisions and should be read alongside the policies in the development plan.
16. Planning decisions must also reflect relevant international obligations and statutory requirements, as must the preparation of development plans
17. The national decision-making policies should be read as a whole (including relevant footnotes and annexes). Some of these policies indicate how much weight the government would expect a particular consideration to be given, including cases where it is appropriate to give substantial weight to certain benefits, and the limited circumstances in which it is expected that permission would be refused.
18. The following policies are relevant to this application

DM3: Determining development proposals

1. When considering development proposals, local planning authorities should:
 - a. Work with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner, where necessary seeking solutions to problems arising from initial proposals, to enable a timely decision;
 - b. Take a proportionate approach to the consideration of the planning matters raised by the proposals, in a way that reflects their scale, complexity and potential impact;
 - c. Take account of planning matters raised during any pre-application engagement, including any positive responses to this engagement, as well as representations on the proposals;
 - d. Consult statutory or internal consultees only where it is necessary to do so. Decisions on development proposals should not be delayed in order to secure advice from a statutory or internal consultee beyond their statutory deadlines unless there is insufficient information to make the decision, there are public safety risks from proceeding without advice, or more detailed advice may enable an approval rather than a refusal;
 - e. Consider whether otherwise unacceptable development proposals could be made acceptable through the use of planning conditions or planning obligations; and
 - f. Not refuse applications for development which should clearly be approved, having regard to their accordance with the development plan, the policies in this Framework and any other material considerations.

DM8: Unauthorised development and enforcement

1. Where there has been unauthorised development and local planning authorities are considering whether enforcement action is expedient, they should take account of their local enforcement plan, the impact of the breach of planning control, and the extent to which the breach would otherwise be acceptable.
2. In cases of unauthorised development where consideration is being given to an application for retrospective planning permission (or through an enforcement appeal, whether to grant planning permission in respect of a breach of planning control), if it is concluded based on evidence that the unauthorised development was intentional, that fact should be given substantial weight in considering whether to grant planning permission.

NB The Consultation states that this responds to long-standing concerns about the integrity of the planning system being undermined by retrospective permissions. The policy does not mean that retrospective applications would be automatically refused. It will remain a matter of planning judgment for the decision-maker to decide whether to grant planning permission in light of the circumstances of each case.

DP3: Key principles for well-designed places

1. Development proposals should respond to their context (the history, character and features of their site and its setting), so that they integrate with and enhance their surroundings; such as through the arrangement of development plots and buildings, the use of materials and architectural features, and the restoration, reuse and integration of heritage assets. This should not preclude innovation or change where appropriate, especially where an increased scale or density of development is justified in accordance with policies L2 and L3.

HE6: Proposals affecting designated heritage assets

1. When considering the potential effect of a development proposal on the significance of a designated heritage asset, substantial weight should be given to the asset's conservation 95 (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential effect amounts to a positive effect, harm, substantial harm, or total loss of its significance.

Local Planning Policy

19. The following planning policies are considered to be relevant to the consideration of this application.

Strategic Development Strategy Policy 1 (SD1) - Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development

1. In accordance with the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), when the Council considers development proposals it will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the NPPF. It will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals for sustainable development can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.
2. Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
3. Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise - taking into account whether:

- Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole; or,
- Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.

Strategic Development Strategy Policy 8 (SD8) - Sustainable Design Principles

1. The Council will seek new development to be designed to the highest possible standard, taking into consideration the context of the surrounding area and the need to respond positively to the:
 - a. Quality, character and sensitivity of the surrounding public realm, heritage assets, and nearby buildings, in particular at prominent junctions, main roads and town centre gateways;
 - b. Landscape character of the area, including the contribution made by existing trees and landscaping;
 - c. Need to protect and enhance ecological and green infrastructure networks and assets;
 - d. Need to ensure that new development is appropriately laid out to ensure adequate separation between buildings and an attractive environment;
 - e. Privacy and amenity of all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;
 - f. Existing transport network and the need to provide safe and satisfactory access and parking for all modes of transport;
 - g. Need to reinforce local distinctiveness and provide high quality and inclusive design solutions, and
 - h. Need for all development to be designed inclusively to ensure that buildings and spaces are accessible for all, including people with disabilities.
2. New development should contribute positively to making places better for people. They should be inclusive and establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit.
3. All proposals will be designed with public safety and the desire to reduce crime in mind, incorporating, where appropriate, advice from the Health and Safety Executive, Secured by Design, or any other appropriate design standards.

Historic Environment Policy 2 (HE2) - Conserving and Enhancing Stockton's Heritage Assets

1. In order to promote and enhance local distinctiveness, the Council will support proposals which positively respond to and enhance heritage assets.
2. Where development has the potential to affect heritage asset(s) the Council require applicants to undertake an assessment that describes the significance of the asset(s) affected, including any contribution made by their setting. Appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, field evaluation will also be required where development on a site which includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest. Applicants are required to detail how the proposal has been informed by assessments undertaken.
3. Development proposals should conserve and enhance heritage assets, including their setting, in a manner appropriate to their significance. Where development will lead to harm to or loss of significance of a designated or non-designated heritage asset the proposal will be considered in accordance with Policy SD8, other relevant Development Plan policies and prevailing national planning policy.
- c. Conservation Areas - Billingham Green; Bute Street; Cowpen Bewley; Eaglescliffe with Preston; Egglescliffe, Hartburn; Norton; Stockton Town Centre; Thornaby Green; Wolviston and Yarm
- d. Listed Buildings

Shop Front Design and Advertisements Technical Guidance and Standards (March 2023)

Material Planning Considerations

20. The main considerations when assessing this application are the impacts on the amenity of the surrounding area and implications for highway and pedestrian safety.

Impact on Amenity of Surrounding Area

21. The NPPF Guidance confirms that “Amenity” is not defined exhaustively in the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007, however it includes aural and visual amenity and factors relevant to amenity include the general characteristics of the locality, including the presence of any feature of historic, architectural, cultural or similar interest.
22. The application site is the car park for the Lidl food store which sits on the edge of Norton Conservation Area and the advertisement application relates to the signs for vehicular parking restrictions of the private car park of the food store.
23. The site sits to the rear of the commercial area of Norton. The signage is at the entrances and also on the existing poles in the car park and two on the building. Given the size of the car park it is considered that the scale, form and number of signs are considered to be appropriate within the car park setting.
24. In terms of the conservation area, only one sign at the entrance is visible and it is not considered that this will detract from the setting of the conservation area, nor will it have an impact on the adjacent listed building.
25. The western boundary is heavily screened and the signs will not have an impact on residential amenity.
26. Taking into account the site layout and location and number of the signs, the proposals are considered to accord with policy SD8 and the guidance of the SPD in these respects.

Impact on Public Safety

27. The Highways Transport and Design Manager has considered the works as carried out and raised no objections. The scheme is considered to be acceptable in terms of pedestrian and highway safety considerations.

Residual Matters

28. Concerns have been raised regarding the operator and their practices however this is not a matter to be considered by this planning department nor are the legality of the existing fines.
29. Concerns have been raised that this is a retrospective permission. Whilst the erection of signage without the necessary consent is a criminal offence, consideration has to be given as to whether it would be expedient to take enforcement action. As the signage is considered acceptable is normal practice to apply retrospectively and this would not be a reason to refuse the application.

30. It should be noted that the application has been submitted with the appropriate plans and has paid the required fee.

Conclusion

31. The signage accords with the above-mentioned Local Plan policies and with the SPD on Shop Front Design and Advertisements and with guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (2026) and it is recommended that the application be approved subject to conditions.

Financial Implications: No known implications.

Environmental Implications: See Officer Report

Legal Implications: None

Community Safety Implications: The provisions of Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 have been taken into account in the preparation of this report.

Human Rights Implications: The provisions of the European Convention of Human Rights 1950 have been taken into account in the preparation of this report.

Ward and Ward Councillors

Ward	Norton Central
Ward Councillor	Councillor Lisa Evans
Ward Councillor	Councillor S I Nelson LLB(Hons) BA (Hons)

Background Papers

National Planning Policy Framework
National Planning Practice Guidance
Stockton on Tees Local Plan Adopted 2019
Shop Front Design and Advertisements Supplementary Planning Document (SPG1, 2013)

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