
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 November 2016

by Alan Novitzky BArch(Hons) MA(RCA) PhD RIBA

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 16 December 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/G5180/Z/16/3154044

Bristol Street Motors Ltd., Sevenoaks Road, Orpington, BR6 7LP

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 against a refusal to grant express consent.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Gavin Bradford against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bromley.
 - The application Ref DC/15/01917/SPLADV, dated 7 May 2015, was refused by notice dated 25 January 2015.
 - The advertisements proposed are one large arched entrance portal complete with new concrete bases (Sign A) and one internally illuminated flex box fascia (Sign C).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The effect of the proposals on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The site is of irregular shape, facing a large roundabout at the junction of the A21, Sevenoaks Road, a primary route, and Cudham Lane North, a minor residential road. The site extends from its road frontage, to intervene abruptly between the rear gardens of four or five pairs of semi-detached dwellings to the north on Cudham Lane North, and The Larches, a Grade II listed building of classical appearance, together with Foxbridge House, a more recent residential care home, to the south.
4. This large Ford dealership complex is unashamedly commercial in nature with its bold frontage buildings and more modest industrial workshop buildings to the rear. It sits uneasily against the domestic character of Cudham Road North and the historic character of the white rendered two storey listed building. It dominates both in an unsympathetic way.
5. The application was for five internally illuminated advertisement signs, three of which were granted consent and are now in place, alongside flags and other advertisement signage. Both proposed advertisement signs are very large. Sign A is a giant portal, over 5m high and almost 6m wide, intended to surround the main entrance to the showroom on the southern elevation, which would command the view from the A21 travelling north. Sign C is a large billboard or fascia sign, well over 12m wide and almost 4m high which would be set at high level on the east elevation directly facing the A21.

6. Both signs would add significantly to the dominance of the site and neither is necessary, in their proposed size and form, to adequately announce the dealership and promote its economic well-being. In particular, Sign A would further harm the already much compromised setting of the listed building by appearing as a completely alien backdrop to the building in its principal prospects from the south and east. Sign C would dominate the east elevation giving much greater presence to the large grey shapes of the main showroom building than exists at present. It would increase the incongruent contrast between the site buildings and the small scale domestic architecture of Cudham Lane North and Old Hill, albeit neither sign may be visible from the dwellings. These effects would be exacerbated during darkness because of the signs' internal illumination.
7. I must determine the appeal in relation to the effect of the proposals on amenity and public safety. Policy BE21 of the Unitary Development Plan for Bromley (2006) requires advertisements to have regard to the character of the surrounding area and to be in keeping with its scale. This Policy is material to the consideration of amenity.
8. I find that the proposals would have an unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the area. No harm to public safety has been demonstrated, but the effect on amenity is sufficient for the appeal to be dismissed.

Alan Novitzky

Inspector