The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 January 2017

by B.Hellier BA(Hons) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 30th January 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/N2345/Z/16/3160848
328 Marsh Lane, Preston, PR1 8RT

- 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 Frank Dewhurst against the decision of Preston City Council.
- The application Ref 06/2016/0556, dated 15 June 2016, was refused by notice dated 23 August 2016.
- The advertisement proposed is two fascia signs to the front (west facing) elevation of the building.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main issues

2. I consider the two main issues are the effect of the advertisements on the character and appearance of the surrounding area and on highway safety.

Reasons

Character and appearance

3. The advertisements would be in the form of non-illuminated sign boards, each measuring 1.65m x 3.5m. They would advertise two businesses in the area owned by the appellant. They would be situated on the front elevation of a two storey block currently used as bedsits/self-contained apartments.

4. The apartment block is a utilitarian, flat roofed, brick building on the corner of Marsh Lane and the heavily trafficked West Strand (A5072), lying under the shadow of the elevated A59 dual carriageway as it comes into the city centre from the west. The A59 retaining wall is set back behind landscaping on one side of Marsh Street. On the other side are two modern office blocks and, further away, a traditional red brick residential terrace. There is a cluster of modern office developments and associated car parking accessed off West Strand.

5. In land use terms the flats are something of an anomaly being surrounded by office buildings of a larger scale and by busy roads. It is a location where well designed commercial advertising should not be ruled out. However in this case the signs would appear incongruous on a principal residential frontage and would be out of scale with the domestic window openings. As such they would

be visually intrusive, contrary to Local Plan[1] Policy EN9 in as much as it seeks development which makes a positive contribution to the character and local distinctiveness of an area, and detrimental to the interests of amenity.

6. The appellant argues that there is a variety of signage in the vicinity including advertising billboards. However I found there to be little commercial advertising nearby apart from temporary estate agency boards and a horizontal banner advertisement on a fitness and training building. The appellant submitted images of advertising hoardings at the West Strand/Watery Lane junction. However this is a rather run down secondary shopping area some distance from the appeal site and of a very different character.

Public safety

7. The proposed signs face a four way traffic light signal controlled junction which includes filter lanes and pedestrian and cycle phases. There is no evidence that it is particularly dangerous. The highway authority was consulted but has not responded. Drivers always need to concentrate although there will be times, when stopped behind a red light, they are able to look around more freely. The proposed signs would not be illuminated, would not move and have no features that would confuse them with traffic signs. I do not consider there would be any material adverse impact on highway safety.

Conclusion

8. I have found in favour of the appellant in relation to public safety but conclude for the reasons given above that the display of the advertisements would be detrimental to the interests of amenity and that the appeal should be dismissed.

Bern Hellier

INSPECTOR

[1] Preston Local Plan: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies. Adopted July 2015