
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 February 2017

by Ian McHugh Dip TP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 2 March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/D1835/Z/16/3164680

The Lakes, 29 Ambleside Drive, Worcester, WR4 9DA

- 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 The Mid Counties Co-operative against the decision of Worcester City Council.
 - The application Ref A16F0022, dated 12 May 2016, was refused by notice dated 25 November 2016.
 - The advertisements proposed are the display of 2 no. externally illuminated folded aluminium fascia panels and 1 no. internally illuminated totem sign.
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Decision

1. That part of the appeal that relates to the 1 no. internally illuminated totem sign is dismissed. That part of the appeal that relates to the 2 no. externally illuminated folded aluminium fascia panels is allowed and express consent is granted for their display. The consent is for five years from the date of this decision and is subject to the five standard conditions set out in the Regulations.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the appearance of the site and its surroundings.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is a former public house building, which is now used as a convenience store. It is situated within a residential estate but it is also close to other commercial properties that provide local services. The appeal property occupies a prominent position on Ambleside Drive, opposite the junction with Trout Beck Drive.
4. The proposal is to display a total of three illuminated signs. Two of these have already been erected and comprise externally illuminated trough lit fascia signs on the two main elevations of the building. The proposal also includes a 4.5m high internally illuminated totem sign, which would be positioned on the site frontage.
5. The Council contends that the proposed signage has, and would have, an unacceptably harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. The Council considers that the extent of illumination and the appearance of the trough lights are visually incongruous because of their design and extent of projection. In addition, the Council is of the opinion that the totem sign would

be excessive and disproportionate in relation to the site and its surroundings. The Council refers to Policy SDWP 21 of the South Worcestershire Development Plan 2016, which states that illuminated signage will only be permitted where the lighting is unobtrusive or is not harmful to the character and appearance of the site or the area in which it is located.

6. The Regulations require that proposals for advertisements are considered with regard to amenity and public safety. No objections have been raised in relation to public safety by the Council or by other parties and I have no reason to arrive at a different conclusion.
7. In terms of amenity, the site has a commercial character, where the display of signage can reasonably be expected. Whilst the two fascia signs are prominent in the streetscene, I consider that the trough lighting (which is contained within narrow strips) is relatively unobtrusive and the intensity of illumination is not excessive. Accordingly, I am not persuaded that these signs are unacceptably harmful to the appearance of the appeal site or its surroundings.
8. With regard to the totem sign, this would be positioned in a prominent position on the site frontage, close to the footway. Whilst a traditional pole sign (originally erected to advertise the former public house) is currently in place on the frontage, the proposed totem sign would, in my opinion, be visually intrusive and harmful to the appearance of the streetscene because of its size, bulk and positioning.

Conditions

9. The Council has not suggested that any conditions are necessary, other than the five standard conditions set out in the Regulations.

Conclusion

10. For the above reasons, it is concluded that the appeal should be dismissed in respect of the 1 no. internally illuminated totem sign. In relation to the other two signs, the appeal is allowed.

Ian McHugh

Inspector