
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 March 2017

by Penelope Metcalfe BA(Hons) MSc DipUP DipDBE MRTPI IHBC

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

Decision date:

Appeal Ref: APP/G1250/Z/16/3162319

Unit 3, Westover Retail Park, Castle Lane West, Bournemouth, BH9 3JS

- 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 Martin Graves against the decision of Bournemouth Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 7-2016-1927-BR, dated 23 August 2017, was refused by notice dated 17 October 2016.
 - The advertisement proposed is erection of an internally illuminated fascia sign and an internally illuminated pylon sign.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and express consent for the display of the internally illuminated pylon sign as applied for is granted. 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.

Procedural matter

2. The Council granted consent for the fascia sign and refused consent for the pylon sign. This appeal relates only to the pylon sign.

Main issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that poorly placed advertisements can have a negative impact on the built environment. Although it states that only advertisements which would clearly have an appreciable impact on a building or the surroundings should be subject to detailed assessment, it also states that they should be subject to control in the interests of amenity.
5. The appeal site is a retail park with a number of large retail units and a Pizza Hut, and car parking. The sign would be located towards the northern end of the boundary of the car park with Castle Lane West. In views from the south, it would be seen together with a pylon sign for Pizza Hut and a variety of street furniture including street lamps, road signs and the traffic lights at the junction of Castle Lane West and Wimbourne Road, a short distance to the north.

Approaching from the north, the views are similarly characterised by various signs and street furniture.

6. I consider that the proposed sign would not have an unacceptable detrimental effect on the visual amenities of the area. The immediate context is a retail park, with residential properties in the surrounding area. The appellant's unit is set back in the park, well away from, and not readily visible from, the main road.
7. The appellant suggests that the business units here have failed or remained vacant for many years, partly due to a lack of road side signage and awareness. Whilst I have no evidence to support this view, it seems to me that this may well be the case. The retail park is not immediately obvious in the midst of the residential surroundings and I consider that it is reasonable to expect businesses such as the appellant's, which to a certain extent rely on passing trade, to be able to advertise their presence in such a context.
8. The proposal would inevitably introduce a new prominent feature into an area where there are other signs and items of street furniture. It would not be fulfilling its function if it were not visible. In my view, it would not be inappropriate in the local context.
9. I conclude that the proposed sign would not materially harm the visual amenities of the area and that it is not contrary to the aims of the Framework.
10. For the reasons given above, the appeal is allowed.

PAG Metcalfe

INSPECTOR