The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 March 2017

by G Powys Jones MSc FRTPI

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

Decision date: 27 March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/F0114/Z/17/3169478
491 Bath Road, Saltford, Bristol, BS31 3HQ

- 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 Saltford Motor Services Ltd against Bath and North East Somerset Council.
- The application Ref 16/05118/AR, dated 18 October 2016, was consented in part and refused in part by notice dated 8 December 2016.
- The advertisements are 1No. non-illuminated free standing sign and 4No. flags to north west elevation

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary matters

2. The Council issued a '*split decision'*. It granted consent for the display of the non-illuminated free-standing sign subject of the original application, but refused consent for the display of the flags.

3. Accordingly, the advertisements subject of this appeal are the flags alone. The original application documentation and plans suggest that the flags are in place, and that consent was sought for the retention of four of the six originally displayed. However, none were on display in the positions shown on the submitted plans at the time of my visit. I shall therefore proceed on the basis that consent is sought for the display of four flags.

Main issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the flag advertisements on the visual amenity of their surroundings.

Reasons

5. The Framework's guidance on advertisement control underlines the fact that the powers under the Regulations to control advertisements may be exercised only in the interests of amenity and public safety. In this context, the development plan policies referred to have been treated as material considerations. The Council has not raised issues relating to public safety.

6. The recently modernised appeal property is comprised of a large vehicle showroom and an adjoining building to the rear used for servicing and repairs. The showroom occupies a prominent corner position fronting Bath Road (A4), and stands alongside other commercial uses on this frontage. It has a return

frontage onto Beech Road, which is a predominantly residential street of good quality.

7. The forecourt at the front of the building facing the A4 was packed with cars displayed for sale when I visited. The forecourt was surrounded by a dozen or so flag advertisements. No information has been provided as to whether or not these are consented. A small, secondary car sales display area fronts Beech Road, and the intention is to display four flags to the front and side of this area.

8. To my mind, the display of the proposed flags in Beech Road would draw attention to and accentuate the commercial nature of the appeal property, whilst diminishing the quality and attractiveness of the adjacent residential area. In view of their prominent position, at the back of pavement close to the highway, the flags would also prove visually intrusive in themselves, detracting from local visual amenity. Moreover, the proposed flags, in addition to the extant flags displayed at the front, would contribute to a harmful clutter of advertising material, to the detriment of local visual amenity.

9. I have considered all other matters raised, including the Parish Council's and residents' objections, but none outweigh the considerations that led me to conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

G Powys Jones

INSPECTOR