
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 May 2017

by Mike Fox BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 12 May 2017.

Appeal Ref: APP/Y1110/Z/17/3171834

Site Q, Silverton Road, Marsh Barton Trading Estate, Exeter, EX2 8DG

- 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 John Wreghitt against part of the split decision of Exeter City Council.
 - The application Ref 16/1666/05, dated 9 December 2016, was partly refused by notice dated 24 January 2017.
 - The advertisement proposed is a freestanding, V shaped, internally illuminated sign.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matters

2. The Council issued a split decision in relation to application Ref 16/1666/05 and granted advertisement consent for a free standing totem sign. The Council's decision specifically excludes the V shaped sign, which has already been erected and which is the subject of the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the existing V shaped sign on the character and appearance of the streetscene.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is a vehicle sales centre, which is located at the north-east corner of the roundabout at the junction of Silverton Road and Yeoford Way. It is surrounded by commercial uses, several of which are also connected with vehicle sales, within a trading estate. It is clear that considerable attention has been paid to the appearance of the area, including control of signage, tree planting and landscaping. The existing freestanding V shaped board which is the subject of the appeal is located about half way along the Silverton Road frontage, to the north of the roundabout.
5. The Appellant argues that there are several other dealerships in the area, all of which have large, illuminated, free standing signs, and that the appeal sign is not any more or less intrusive than these other signs; he also states that the size of the sign is necessary to enable the Appellant's dealership, which is bringing much needed new employment to the area, to be seen over shrubbery and trees.

6. From my observations, the V shaped appeal sign, each side of which measures approx. 6.3m by 5m, is significantly higher and larger than other neighbouring signs. As such, its height and size appear out of place both in relation to neighbouring signs, for example the signage for the Medical Eye Clinic on the opposite side of Silverton Road, and to the scale of the landscaping both on and surrounding the site. It is therefore unduly prominent within the streetscene. Although the sign was not illuminated at the time of my visit, this would reinforce its prominence and visual impact.
7. On the basis of the above considerations, I conclude that the appeal sign is harmful to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. As such it is contrary to paragraph 67 of *the Framework*¹, which seeks to protect areas from an appreciable impact from advertisements. It is also contrary to Local Plan² saved policy DG8, which states that advertisements will not be permitted if they are likely to cause harm to the character and appearance of the area in which they are situated.
8. In response to the Appellant's comments on the existing shrubbery and trees, a number of well-spaced saplings have been planted along the boundary of the site facing Silverton Road. I consider that a smaller sign, more in keeping with the nearest neighbouring signs, would be clearly seen in this landscaped context, and that the size of the existing appeal sign is not necessary in order to be seen. I am also not persuaded by any robust evidence that such a large sign is necessary to bring employment to the site.
9. In conclusion, I have found that the appeal sign harms the character and appearance of the streetscene, contrary to the relevant policies in *the Framework* and the Local Plan. For the reasons given and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should fail.

Mike Fox

INSPECTOR

¹ DCLG: National Planning Policy Framework (*the Framework*); March 2012.

² Exeter Local Plan First Review 1995-2011.