
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 June 2017

by Gareth W Thomas BSc(Hons) MSc(Dist) PGDip MRTPI

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

Decision date: 5th July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/U1620/Z/17/3174008

Evans Halshaw, Unit 4 Barnwood Point, Corinium Avenue, Gloucester GL4 3HX

- 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 of Pendragon PLC against the decision of Gloucester City Council.
 - The application Ref 16/01582/ADV, dated 19 December 2016, was refused by notice dated 23 February 2017.
 - The advertisement proposed is for 1 x Freestanding V Shaped Internally Illuminated Sign.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue in this case is the effect of the proposal on amenity.

Reasons

3. The advertisement comprises a v-shaped sign measuring 3m x 6.3m x 5m x 200mm of white and blue plastic coated aluminium within a aluminium box section. The sign is internally illuminated with only the text itself actually illuminated to give a halo effect.
 4. Located at a busy signalled controlled roundabout, the sign is set back from the roadside at the edge of the outside car sales display area beyond which is the modern car showroom that occupies a prominent roadside location on Corinium Avenue, a dual carriageway highway at this point. The appellant explains that the sign needs to be sufficiently large to attract the attention of passing motorists. An illuminated totem pole sign at the immediate frontage of the building was considered acceptable by the local planning authority. The entrance to the modern showroom building includes a large fascia sign that displays the same information as the appeal sign and its shape is of similar contemporary design.
 5. Although the appellants maintain that the site is within a commercial area where there are other examples of advertisements, from what I saw, there does not appear to be an over-proliferation of advertisement material and what there are, these mainly relate to the premises that they are situated upon and are signs on buildings in the main. Whilst I accept that the display would be
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sited along a well-designed roundabout leading to a section of dual carriageway and would not thus result in any highway safety issues, the position and size of the sign would have an abrupt obtrusive appearance when viewed from the adjoining highway. Moreover, the sign would appear as an isolated feature that would intrude into the landscaped area at this roundabout and thus appear as a discordant element that would be unrelated to the premises generally at this location.

6. Therefore, taking into account the prominence of the site, I am of the opinion that the excessive size and location of the proposed display would detract appreciably and unacceptably from the amenity of the locality. In coming to this view, I acknowledge that the roundabout and dual carriageway drives straight through what is essentially a commercial area; however, this would not justify features that would be otherwise discordant. I noted the presence of the signs that are currently being displayed closer to or on the appeal premises and at other locations close-by; however these are less obtrusive and are either directly associated with the building premises that they serve or are fixed to buildings. As such they do not appear isolated and discordant but rather better relate to their surroundings. Furthermore, they do not have a significant effect on defining the character and appearance of the wider area and consequently, are materially different to the scheme before me.
7. I have no reason to consider the advertisement would harm public safety.
8. In assessing the proposal, I have considered the various policies identified by the Council. However, powers under the Regulations to control advertisements may be exercised only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking into account all material factors. Therefore in determining this appeal, the Council's policies have been given weight as material planning considerations but have not in themselves, been decisive.
9. Accordingly, I conclude that the proposal would have an unacceptable and appreciable impact on the amenity of the area, and would be contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework. Therefore the appeal should be dismissed.

Gareth W Thomas

INSPECTOR