

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 August 2017

by N McGurk BSc (Hons) MCD MBA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 05 September 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/V2825/Z/17/3174033

56a Wellingborough Road, Northampton, NN1 4DN

- 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 Sky Cars against the decision of Northampton Borough Council.
 - The application Ref N/2017/0145, dated 14 January 2017, was refused by notice dated 18 April 2017.
 - The advertisement proposed is a retrospective application for shop front alteration and signage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The advertisement the subject of this appeal is already in place.
3. The Council confirms that the advertisement has a length of 1 metre, a width of 2.05 metres, a projection of 0.16 metres and that it is internally illuminated.

Main Issue

4. The main issue in this case is the effect of the advertisement on visual amenity, with particular regard to its effect on the Boot and Shoe Quarter Conservation Area.

Reasons

5. The appeal property forms part of a terrace of two and three storey properties along Wellingborough Road. It is situated within a predominantly commercial area and other properties within the terrace are in commercial use.
 6. The appeal property fronts Wellingborough Road, which is a busy town centre thoroughfare and is located within the Boot and Shoe Quarter Conservation Area, which is characterised by the presence of period properties which have retained many of their attractive period features, including upper-storey fenestration and attractive brickwork.
 7. The upper floors of the appeal property and those of other properties within the same terrace, retain a sense of period charm and the presence of brick buildings, open space and trees on the opposite side of Wellingborough Road provide the area with open and green attributes.
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8. The ground floor of No 56 Wellingborough Road has been split into two commercial units, with the narrower portion comprising No 56a, the appeal property. The advertisement the subject of this appeal is located across the whole of the narrow width of No 56a's frontage. Its width combines with a depth of such significance that the advertisement serves to dominate the appearance of the appeal property to an overwhelming degree.
9. The harmful impact of the above is exacerbated by the box-like appearance of the advertisement, along with its internal illumination, which results in an advertisement that draws attention to itself as an incongruous feature in its surroundings. This detracts from the overall appearance of the appeal property, drawing the eye away from its attractive upper stories.
10. The advertisement's incongruous appearance is partly due to there not being another internally illuminated box sign of similar appearance in the vicinity, as well as being the direct result of the advertisement's dimensions, particularly its significant depth, which leads it to appear out of keeping with neighbouring signs.
11. In support of the advertisement, the appellant notes that it replaced a similar advertisement of the same size. However, the evidence before me shows that that previous advertisement did not comprise an internally illuminated box sign and its impact was, consequently, different to that of the advertisement the subject of this appeal.
12. Taking all of the above into account, I find that the advertisement is detrimental to visual amenity. This is contrary to the Framework, to West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2014) policies S10 and BN5 and to Northampton Central Area Action Plan (2013) policy 1, which together amongst other things, seek to protect local character.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, the appeal does not succeed.

N McGurk

INSPECTOR