

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 January 2018

by G Powys Jones MSc FRTPI

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

Decision date: 22 January 2018

Appeal Ref: APP/Z0116/Z/17/3179761

332 Gloucester Road, Horfield, Bristol, BS7 8TJ

- 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 Miss Suzanne Carey for Emmaus Bristol against Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref 17/01121/A, dated 1 March 2017, was refused by notice dated 18 May 2017.
 - The advertisement is described by the appellant as 'facial displaying name/address/number of shop'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and consent for a fascia advertisement at 332 Gloucester Road, Horfield, Bristol, BS7 8TJ is granted in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 17/01121/A, dated 1 March 2017, subject to the five standard conditions set out in the Regulations.

Main issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the advertisement on the visual amenity of its surroundings.

Reasons

3. The appeal property lies alongside the busy Gloucester Road (A38). The advertisement subject of the appeal has been erected and is on display, so that its effects on local amenity may be assessed at first hand. The appellant's description of the advertisement has been used in the banner heading above, but as I saw this is a non-illuminated fascia advertisement.

4. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) advises that the term 'amenity':

'is usually understood to mean the effect on visual and aural amenity in the immediate neighbourhood of an advertisement or site for the display of advertisements, where residents or passers-by will be aware of the advertisement.'

So, in assessing amenity, the local planning authority would always consider the local characteristics of the neighbourhood: for example, if the locality where the advertisement is to be displayed has important scenic, historic, architectural or cultural features, the local planning authority would consider whether it is in scale and in keeping with these features.'

5. I have not been made aware of any important scenic, historic, architectural or cultural features in the area. The locality struck me as a predominantly retail area, with shops on the ground floor either side of the main road, with flats
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above. The scene is fairly typical of suburban retail areas found within many British cities adjacent to busy primary roads.

6. Virtually all the local shops display fascia signs of different types. In the immediate vicinity of the appeal site, the signs are set at different heights, so there is no uniformity of display. The appeal advertisement is set slightly higher than those closest to it, but this I suspect was governed by a perceived need to protect the attractive awning on the shop front.
7. The advertisement in terms of its size and materials of construction is little different to many others in the locality, and does not stand out. I do not share the Council's concerns as to the content of the advertisement; in my experience, the address and telephone numbers of the occupant are not unusual features and provide useful information to potential customers.
8. I conclude that the advertisement sits acceptably in its visual and spatial context without causing harm to local amenity. Accordingly, I intend to allow the appeal subject to the standard conditions. The Council does not consider any additional conditions to be necessary, and I have no reason to differ.
9. All other matters raised in the representations have been considered and taken into account, including the references to the *National Planning Policy Framework* (The Framework).
10. 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.
11. No other matter raised outweighs the considerations that led me to my conclusions.

G Powys Jones

INSPECTOR