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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 January 2018

**by Andrew Dawe BSc(Hons) MSc MPhil MRTPI**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 31 January 2018**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/X1118/Z/17/3185273**

**Unit 2 Barum Gate Retail Park, Westacott Road, Barnstaple EX32 8QD**

- 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 Lamb of UK Storage Company (SW) Ltd against the decision of North Devon Council.
  - The application Ref 63383, dated 26 May 2017, was refused by notice dated 30 August 2017.
  - The advertisements proposed are two illuminated signs; one on the west elevation and one on the south elevation.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Procedural Matters

2. I have taken into account the Government's Planning Practice Guidance, issued on 6 March 2014, in reaching my decision.
3. The Council submitted, in relation to the appeal, a copy of a map showing the Area of Special Advertisement Control (ASAC) which covers a large proportion of the District. However, the parties agree that no weight should be added by the existence of the ASAC and I have no reason to consider otherwise.

### Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed advertisements on the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

### Reasons

5. The site is located at a prominent gateway location on the approach to the town centre of Barnstaple. The building, of which the site is a part, comprises a row of adjoined units. It is of a simple modern design with distinctly vertical design features, including regularly positioned brick columns, which provides a pleasing rhythm to the building. As such, it appropriately complements the surrounding built environment at this prominent location. Existing signage on the south elevation of the units respects that design, being contained within the lines of those brick columns with the exception of a more temporary looking 'Now Open' banner sign relating to the appeal site. Those signs are also non-illuminated.

6. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) states that advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts.
7. The proposed advertisements would be significantly wider than any existing signage on the south and west elevations of that row of units including the site, and internally illuminated with no indication that only the letters and logo would be lit. Furthermore, in respect of that proposed for the south elevation, it would noticeably extend across and beyond two of the brick column features, thereby creating a distinctive conflict with the building's design and rhythm, in particular the regular verticality of those existing elevation features. The signs would therefore be dominant and incongruous features of the building that would draw the eye disproportionately in this prominent location.
8. There are other illuminated signs in the immediate vicinity, including in respect of the adjacent hotel and restaurant to the west of the site. However those adjacent signs are generally of modest size where the extent of illumination is fairly restricted, including some which are only externally illuminated. There is a freestanding totum sign relating to the restaurant located close to the road and the western end of the appeal site. That sign, along with another similar one further to the west, is internally illuminated but only relating to the letters, logo and a vertical strip on one side, such that it does not form a dominant feature of the streetscene. The circumstances are therefore different in those neighbouring cases to those of the appeal scheme.
9. The appellant has also drawn my attention to other illuminated signs in the area further to the west of the site. However, their circumstances in terms of location and design, including in relation to the buildings to which they relate, are again different to those of the appeal scheme which I have considered on its own merits.
10. For the above reasons, and taking into consideration the Framework, the proposed advertisements would cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area and as such would be materially detrimental to amenity.

## **Conclusion**

11. For the above reasons I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

*Andrew Dawe*

INSPECTOR