
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 June 2019

by Sarah Manchester BSc MSc PhD MEnvSc

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12th July 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/Q4245/Z/19/3226029

Sale Golf Club, Sale Lodge, Golf Road, Sale, Cheshire M33 2XU

- 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 Simon Poucher against the decision of Trafford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 95967/ADV/18, dated 23 October 2018, was refused by notice dated 27 February 2019.
 - The advertisement proposed is a free standing, non-illuminated sign (2 x 3m) located 3.05m from the ground. The sign will display the words "Sale Golf Club".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The advertisement is described in the application form as 'Sale Golf Club'. However, I have adopted the description in the banner heading above from the appeal form in the interests of clarity, as this better describes the proposed advertisement.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed advertisement on amenity.

Reasons

4. The Regulations require that decisions are made only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of any material factors. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) reiterate this approach. Therefore, while I have taken account of the policies and guidelines that the Council considers to be relevant to this appeal, these have not been decisive in my determination of this appeal.
5. The appeal site is situated close to the boundary of the golf course overlooking the adjacent tram line and the M60 motorway and in close proximity to the nearby slip road. It is next to a line of dense coniferous planting and towards the end of the close-boarded boundary fence that runs between the built environment of the golf club and the adjacent tram line. Notwithstanding the nearby motorway and associated signage, the surrounding area has the character and appearance of woodland and undeveloped countryside.

6. The proposed large free-standing advertisement would be screened from the golf course by trees and it would not be readily apparent from the golf club buildings, internal parking areas or access roads. However, it would be prominent above the boundary fence when viewed from the adjacent motorway and tramline. As a result of its siting, it would not be seen in the immediate context of the built environment. It would be visually obtrusive and discordant against the backdrop of the continuous tree cover and natural green space in this locality. Consequently, it would detract from the character and appearance of the area.
7. For these reasons, I find that the proposed advertisement would be harmful to visual amenity. In its decision notice the Council has referred to Policy L7 of the Trafford Local Plan Core Strategy Adopted January 2012 (the Core Strategy) which requires, among other things, that development should be appropriate in the context and character of the area. My attention has also been drawn to the Advertisements Supplementary Planning Guidelines 1995 which state that large signs are normally inappropriate in areas of open landscape. I have taken into account the relevant policies which are material in this case. Given that I have concluded that the advertisement would harm amenity, it would conflict with the relevant policy and guidance.
8. The Council has also referred to Policy R4 of the Core Strategy, which relates to the protection of the Green Belt. However, the Regulations state that advertisements are subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety. Therefore, policies in the development plan and the Framework that relate to the protection of the Green Belt are not relevant to this appeal decision.
9. I acknowledge that there are other advertisements elsewhere in the area, some of which are also in the Green Belt and on busy roads. However, on the basis of the information before me, they appear to differ in a number of ways including in terms of their size, scale and siting and the context and character of the surrounding area. Moreover, they do not form part of the character of the area against which the impact on amenity is being assessed.
10. While the proposed advertisement would be a benefit to the golf club, the PPG explains that, in the context of advertisements, amenity is understood to relate to effects on visual or aural amenity in the area. This is not therefore a matter that I can take into account.

Conclusion

11. I therefore conclude that the proposed advertisement would harm the character and appearance of the area and it would be detrimental to amenity. The appeal should therefore be dismissed.

Sarah Manchester

INSPECTOR