



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 July 2019

by Rachael Pipkin, BA (Hons), MPhil, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20th August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/G1250/Z/19/3227346

38 Holdenhurst Road, Bournemouth, BH8 8AD

- 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 Firth of Stonegate Pub Co Ltd. against the decision of Bournemouth Borough Council.
 - The application Ref: 7-2019-10346-I dated 2 January 2019, was refused by notice dated 10 April 2019.
 - The advertisement proposed is installation of replacement illuminated and non-illuminated signs to the exterior of the building.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The appellant applied for both ground floor signs and an upper floor hanging sign. The Council granted permission for the ground floor signs. The appeal before me therefore relates to the upper floor hanging sign only. I have therefore proceeded on that basis.
3. The signs have already been erected.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the sign on the visual amenity of the area.

Reasons

5. Paragraph 132 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) confirms that the issues of amenity and, where applicable, public safety, are the determining factors in advertisement appeals. The Regulations state that the development plan policies alone cannot be decisive when determining cases such as this one. Nevertheless, the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) advises that in assessing the effect on amenity, factors such as historic, architectural or cultural features in the neighbourhood can be taken into consideration.
6. The appeal site is a non-designated heritage asset. It is also immediately adjacent to a Grade II listed building, the Old Fire Station. I have therefore had regard to the statutory duty in relation to heritage assets alongside the Council's policies, the advice and guidance of the Framework and the PPG as material considerations in reaching my decision.

7. 38 Holdenhurst Road is a large, traditional brick built three-storey building which incorporates a high level of detailing including classical shopfront features of brick pilasters topped with consoles, a fascia and cornicing. At first floor level, the building has three distinctive semi-circular windows separated by brick columns with the central one, larger than those either side and topped by a pediment with a slightly recessed second storey behind this. These traditional features make the building both attractive and of historic value.
8. The Old Fire Station is a substantial three-storey, brick-built building, incorporating a range of original features associated with its previous use, and round arched windows at first floor level and a central turret above. This building together with the appeal site and other buildings along this side of Holdenhurst Road, create an attractive terrace of prominent, architecturally interesting, historic buildings along the street.
9. Holdenhurst Road is a busy commercial street, with a mix of buildings including some modern, multi-storey buildings on the opposite side of the road to the appeal site. The appeal site is in use as a public house, the adjacent buildings are in similar uses.
10. The proposed sign is positioned at first floor level where it projects from a brick column adjacent to the window closest to 40 Holdenhurst Road. The sign is illuminated, large and modern in appearance with a simple hanging bracket. I understand that this replaces a sign of a similar size and in a similar position. However, from the evidence submitted the previous sign appears to have been set within a more traditional frame and hanging from a more ornate bracket.
11. Due to its modern appearance, the sign does not relate to the character and architectural features of this historic building. It therefore appears as an incongruous element on the building. Its high-level position and size adjacent to the first-floor window obscures views of this feature of the building when approaching from the north. This makes the sign appear out of scale and visually dominant on the building. Consequently, it detracts from the building and adversely affects its character and appearance.
12. Within the cluster of historic buildings, the impact of this high level, modern sign, reduces the contribution these buildings make to the character and appearance of the street scene. It therefore fails to preserve the setting of the adjacent listed building.
13. While the surrounding area is commercial in character, from my observations on site, there are no examples of projecting signs at such a high level within the immediate area although there are a few examples of lower level illuminated projecting signs to buildings south of the appeal site including one to another public house. The sign is visible from a number of locations along the street, as such it appears visually prominent within the street scene, more so when it is illuminated.
14. The appellant has made several other arguments in support of the proposal. This includes the need to have a prominent sign to attract more customers thereby enhancing the economic well-being and viability of the public house with associated employment on site; that the signage is ephemeral and will have no permanent, long-term lasting impact on the surrounding area; the size of the replacement sign is similar to what was previously installed; and that if

permission is not granted, the appellant will implement an alternative signage strategy using deemed consent rights that would result in a number of separate signs on the exterior of the building and behind the windows. However, these factors do not provide sufficient justification to allow a sign that has caused the harm described above.

15. I therefore conclude that the sign is harmful to the visual amenity of the area and fails to preserve the setting of the adjacent listed building. The Council has cited Policies CS40 and CS41 of the Bournemouth Local Plan Core Strategy 2012. These, amongst other things, seek to protect local heritage assets and require development to be high quality and to conserve or improve the townscape. I have taken account of the conflict with the requirements of the Council's policies as material considerations in my assessment of the proposal.

Conclusion

16. For the reasons set out above, the appeal is dismissed.

Rachael Pipkin
Inspector