
Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 27 November 2019

by Mr JP Sargent BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 9 December 2019

Appeal A: APP/D1835/Y/19/3220821

45 Foregate Street, Worcester WR1 1EE

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Mr Peter Grieves of Martin & Co Worcester against the decision of Worcester City Council.
 - The application Ref L18D0038, dated 4 July 2018, was refused by notice dated 30 November 2018.
 - The works proposed are to install new signage to reflect updated corporate specification, replacing previous illuminated signage.
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Appeal B: APP/D1835/H/19/3220823

45 Foregate Street, Worcester WR1 1EE

- 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 Peter Grieves of Martin & Co Worcester against the decision of Worcester City Council.
 - The application Ref A18D0039, dated 4 July 2018, was refused by notice dated 30 November 2018.
 - The advertisement proposed is to install new signage to reflect updated corporate specification, replacing previous illuminated signage.
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Decisions

Appeal A

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal B

2. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

3. The main issues with these 2 appeals are (a) whether the advertisements preserve the special architectural or historic interest of this Grade II listed building and their impact on its significance; and (b) the effect of the advertisements on amenity, having regard to the need to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Historic City Conservation Area¹ in which the site is located.

¹ This name is taken from the Officer Reports and decision notices. On the submitted conservation area map it is said to be within the Foregate Street & The Tything Conservation Area No 8.

Reasons

4. The appeal property is in a busy commercial road frontage on the north side of Worcester city centre. It dates predominantly from the mid-18th Century and, externally, its detailing at first floor level and above reflects its age, contributes to its special architectural and historic interest, and adds to its significance as a designated heritage asset. At ground floor level though a relatively modern shop frontage has been imposed that removed or masks any features and fabric of historic value.
5. The significance of the Historic City Conservation Area lies, in part, in the way its buildings reflect the evolution of this historic city centre. Its appearance is dominated by older buildings of a range of ages, and it has a character that respects the presence of commercial activity over time. In this regard, given its apparent age the appeal property makes a positive contribution to the significance of this asset.
6. The scheme before me is for 2 internally illuminated advertisements, one of which is a fascia sign and the other is a projecting sign. Such signage is now being displayed and appears to reflect what is shown on the submitted plans.
7. As the site is within a commercial area, sensitive modern signage is an established part of the locality's character and appearance and, given the building's existing frontage treatment, it need not necessarily be inappropriate on this property.
8. When I arrived at the site it was dusk and both advertisements, along with many others around, were illuminated. To my mind, the level and nature of illumination was sensitive to the area and the building, and did not result in the advertisements being too prominent or striking.
9. The projecting sign is not particularly large and sits clearly within the section of the modern frontage above the shop window where such a sign would be expected. It therefore does not harm the significance of the listed building. I noted a number of other projecting signs, albeit of different styles and methods of illumination, on properties nearby. Such advertisements are therefore part of the surroundings, and so, given its dimensions and its position on the frontage, the projecting sign preserves the amenity of the locality and the character and appearance of the conservation area.
10. However, the fascia sign is relatively deep and seems to run the full width of No 45. These dimensions mean it is unduly bulky and dominant, appearing to be imposed on the building rather than integrated into its overall appearance. As a result, it relates poorly to the property, failing to have regard to the historical context in which it is located. In this respect it differs from the fascia sign it replaced, as that previous one was not as deep and had a border all around, resulting in it being more subservient in relation to No 45.
11. I appreciate that the ground floor treatment has little regard to the significance of the building, but there is still a requirement for subsequent alterations not to cause further harm to this relationship. In my opinion, and even accepting the existing impact of the frontage, its dominance and lack of regard to its context mean that the fascia sign before me does cause additional harm.
12. I therefore conclude that the fascia advertisement results in harm, albeit less than substantial, to the significance of this Grade II listed building, and fails to

preserve its special architectural or historic interest. Moreover, by being a bulky and discordant element on a listed building in a prominent streetscape, it also does not preserve the character or appearance of the conservation area, causing less than substantial harm to its significance as well and eroding the amenity of the locality. I am aware of no public benefits that outweigh this harm. Therefore, the advertisements are contrary to guidance in the *National Planning Policy Framework* and, insofar as they are material considerations in these appeals, Policies SWDP6, SWDP21 and SWDP24 of the *South Worcestershire Development Plan*, which broadly seek high quality design that respects the historic context. The appeals are therefore dismissed.

J P Sargent

INSPECTOR