



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 25 February 2020 by G Sibley MPLAN MRTPI

Decision by K Taylor BSc (Hons) PGDip MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 26 March 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Y2810/Z/19/3241653

Armadillo Self Storage, Long March, Daventry NN11 4HE

- 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 David Knight of Big Yellow Self Storage Company Limited against the decision of Daventry District Council.
- The application Ref: DA/2019/0715, dated 14 August 2019, was refused by notice dated 10 October 2019.
- The development proposed is described on the application form as the installation of 6no. internally illuminated wall-mounted signs, 1no. non-illuminated wall-mounted sign and 2no. non-illuminated freestanding entrance signs.

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and express consent is granted for the installation of 6no. internally illuminated wall-mounted signs, 1no. non-illuminated wall-mounted sign and 2no. non-illuminated freestanding entrance signs at Armadillo Self Storage, Long March, Daventry NN11 4HE in accordance with the terms of the application Ref: DA/2019/0715, dated 14 August 2019. The consent is for five years from the date of this decision and is subject to the five standard conditions set out in Schedule 2 of the 2007 Regulations and the following additional condition:
 - 1) The illumination for the signage hereby permitted shall be of a non-flashing or non-intermittent type and the intensity of the illumination of signs A, B, E and G permitted by this consent shall be no greater than 600cd/m² and signs D and F permitted by this consent shall be no greater than 300cd/m².

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Procedural Matter

3. Since the determination of the application the Settlement and Countryside Local Plan (Part 2) (LP) was adopted on 20 February 2020 and replaced the Settlement and Countryside Local Plan, Saved Policies (1997). The Council has identified the relevant policies for the determination of the appeal and the appellant has had the opportunity to comment on them.

Main Issue

4. The effect of the proposed development upon the visual amenity of the host building and the street scene.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The advertisements would be located on and around the Armadillo Self Storage building which is located within the Long March Industrial Estate and is next to a roundabout which has a pedestrian underpass that runs alongside the building. The building is constructed from grey metal sheeting with red accent around the roof, doors and windows. The footprint of the building is staggered, and the advertisements would face in two separate directions depending on which wall they would be located on. The development around the roundabout is a mixture of industrial and residential which are all typically set back behind relatively large grass verges. There are a number of advertisements connected to the various industrial estates situated around the roundabout, as well as the petrol station to the east.
6. The proposed advertisements would be a mixture of wall-mounted and free-standing signs. The two free standing signs would be located at the entrance into the site and would replace several existing signs. The wall-mounted signs would replace the existing advertisements that are located across the building. The Council note that there is no planning history for the existing advertisements. Nevertheless, the advertisements are in place and I have not been made aware that the Council has issued a discontinuance notice to have them removed.
7. The wall-mounted signs would have a purple background with yellow, black and white writing to match the Armadillo Self Storage branding. The free-standing signs would swap the proposed colour scheme. Signs A, B, D, E, F and G would all be internally illuminated.
8. Each wall of the building would have one advertisement located on it, with the exception of the central wall which would have two signs. On each wall the advertisement would typically only occupy a small proportion of the wall and signs A, B, C, E and G would not appear to be disproportionately large on the relevant elevations of the building.
9. Whilst signs B and C would not individually appear disproportionately large because sign C would be located off centre to the door below it, this would create a modestly unbalanced elevation.
10. Signs D and F would both be considerably larger than the other proposed signs. Sign D would occupy almost the full width of the building but relatively short in height and sign F would be almost half the height of the building but relatively narrow in width. Sign D would be visible when approaching the site from the north along South Way and Sign F would be visible when approaching the roundabout from Long March. Nevertheless, the two advertisements would be located on an industrial building, within an industrial estate where large colourful advertisements are common.
11. The existing building is a relatively unattractive industrial unit and the elevations have several signs adorned across them. Whilst these advertisements do not appear to have been granted consent, those signs are in situ and due to the cluttered appearance of those advertisements on those elevations, they do harm the visual amenity of the building and thus the street scene.

12. The proposed advertisements would reduce the number of signs on those elevations and would be more attractive than the existing appearance of the building. Whilst the advertisements would be visible from the roadside, they would be seen within an area where there are several industrial estates, where advertisements are commonly seen. Because the signs are located on staggered elevations which face in two separate directions, they would not be viewed together which would lessen the cumulative impact they would have on the visual amenity of the street scene. The advertisements would also be set back a considerable distance from the roadside and the pedestrian footpath and this would mean the advertisements would appear smaller from the public domain. Signs D and F would be larger than the other proposed advertisements but there are other advertisements within the street scene and the industrial estate that are of a similar scale which do not harm the visual amenity of the street scene. Because the advertisements would be internally illuminated, and the candescence of the illumination could be controlled by a condition, the harmful effect the advertisements would have upon the visual amenity of the street scene during the evening would be limited. Whilst Sign C would unbalance that elevation of the building, the combined effect of the proposed signs would not clutter the appearance of the building.
13. Sign H would be a free-standing directional sign which would be around 2 metres(m) tall. The sign would have a yellow background and would appear in contrast to the colour palette for the building behind it. Nevertheless, the sign would be located within an industrial estate where large colourful signage is relatively common. Sign I would identify the opening times and would be located on a palisade fence. Because the sign would be relatively small and set back from the roadside it would have very limited effect upon the visual amenity of the street scene or the surrounding area generally. Whilst the signs would appear slightly different to the other proposed signage because the colour scheme is reversed, the signage would still clearly be related to the same business. Consequently, the proposed signs would not cause harm to the visual amenity of the host building or the street scene.
14. Policies ENV1 and ENV10 are referred to by the Council as the two policies within the LP that are most relevant. The Regulations, the National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance are clear that advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of public safety and amenity. These two policies are broad landscape and design-based policies that are not specific to advertisements. Because of this, the content of the policies has not been determinative in reaching my recommendation.

Conditions

15. The Council has suggested an additional condition to the 5 standard conditions set out in Schedule 2 of the 2007 Regulations which seeks to ensure the illumination of the advertisements shall be of a non-flashing or non-intermittent type. This condition is considered necessary in the interests of preserving the visual amenity of the street scene. The appellant has also suggested that they would be content with a condition that limited the candescence to 300cd/m² for Signs D and F and 600cd/m² for the other signs that would be illuminated. A condition controlling this would also be necessary in the interests of the visual amenity of the street scene and in the interest of brevity I have combined the two suggested conditions as they cover a similar matter.

Conclusion and Recommendation

16. The proposed advertisements would not harm the visual amenity of the street scene or the surrounding area. Therefore, for the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be allowed.

G Sibley

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

17. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report, and, on that basis, I too agree that the appeal should be allowed.

K Taylor

INSPECTOR