



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 July 2020

by Robert Parker BSc (Hons) Dip TP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 July 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/W1715/Z/20/3246750

Southampton Audi, 50-78 Bournemouth Road, Chandler's Ford SO53 3DH

- 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 Barry King of Harwoods against the decision of Eastleigh Borough Council.
 - The application Ref A/19/86647, dated 14 October 2019, was refused by notice dated 18 December 2019.
 - The advertisement proposed is described as "a purpose designed, double sided, mobile, free standing point-of-sale device to display images of the products and services we sell on the premises. This is not a digital sign, the unit contains canvases with a static image and text".
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The type of proposed advertisement in the banner heading is taken from the application form. However, the decision notice describes the proposal more succinctly as the display of 1no. free standing, non-illuminated double sided point-of-sale advertisement.
3. The application form states that consent is being sought for a period of 2 years. I have dealt with the appeal on that basis.

Main Issue

4. The Council does not raise any objections on public safety grounds, and I have no reason to take a different view. The main issue is therefore the effect of the proposed advertisement on amenity.

Reasons

5. The character of this stretch of Bournemouth Road is predominantly residential, but there are various commercial uses scattered along its length. Southampton Audi is one of the larger businesses, comprising a smart modern building set back from the road behind a narrow grass verge containing street trees. The business name and Audi logo are integrated into the glazed building façade and there is a pylon sign on the frontage, together with some flags on the used car forecourt. Overall, the signage is restrained; the premises are attractive and well designed, and they sit comfortably in the wider street scene.

6. The proposed signage would be prominently located at the main entrance to the site, adjacent to Bournemouth Road. The double sided advertisement cassette would measure 2.57 m wide by 1.96 m high and it would be 0.45 m in depth. The structure would be raised above the ground by a 2.3 m tall mast which would sit on a weighted base to provide stability. This would take the overall height to 4.28 m.
7. The new signage would be viewed against the backdrop of a car dealership and therefore I accept the appellant's point that it would have a commercial setting. However, the advertisement would be unduly prominent in the street scene due to its excessive size and elevation. The display unit would draw the eye as a result of its chunky design and clumsy appearance. This would be in direct contrast to the high quality signage elsewhere on the site and at odds with the character of the locality where business signs are predominantly understated.
8. The appellant states that there are over 300 other sites around the country where these temporary advertising signs are in use without complaint from the relevant authorities. I have been provided with a copy of a decision from Guildford Borough where advertisement consent was given for signage of the same description. However, I do not know the circumstances of any of those cases and it is an established principle that proposals should be considered on their merits, having regard to the particular context of the site.
9. The Council has drawn my attention to Policy 67.BE of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan Review 2001-2011. The proposal would conflict with the policy requirement that advertisements should not detract from the character of the locality and be appropriate to their surroundings in terms of matters such as design, size and positioning. Although I have taken into account the policy as a material factor it has not been decisive as the powers under the Regulations to control advertisements can only be exercised in the interests of amenity and public safety.
10. Although it would be temporary, the proposed advertisement would be detrimental to the interests of amenity for the period of its display. For this reason, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Robert Parker

INSPECTOR