



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 July 2020

by David Wyborn BSc(Hons) MPhil MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10 August 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/U1105/Z/20/3250237

Newcourt Barton, Clyst Road, Topsham, Exeter, Devon EX3 0DB

- 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 Andrew Kitchener of KLP Ltd against the decision of East Devon District Council.
 - The application Ref 20/0321/ADV, dated 7 February 2020, was refused by notice dated 17 March 2020.
 - The advertisement proposed is for 2 signs each with 2 boards sharing same posts: size 1m wide x 0.6m high each.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the signs on the visual amenity of the area.

Reasons

3. Despite the proximity of Exeter and the M5, this part of Clyst Road has a generally rural character with field hedges located behind grassed verges and open fields predominantly forming the wider surroundings. The Newcourt Barton Business Units are set back from the road and are not seen directly in association with the access, such that the entranceway area with its verges, mature trees and surrounding hedges assimilates with and contributes to the rural character of the area.
4. The National Planning Policy Framework advises that the quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed. In this case, the signs would be sited in a location either side of the entrance and would be of a size designed to attract the attention of passing motorists. With their reasonable size, number and aluminium panel form they would be reasonably prominent and add clutter to this stretch of roadside eroding some of its rural character. This would harm the visual amenity of the area.
5. The evidence includes that there are no other applications or proposals for signs to identify and direct motorists to the other individual business units, that there are no representations objecting to the signs and that a condition is offered by the appellant that, if a communal sign was agreed, these signs would be removed. Furthermore, if express consent was granted then it would be for 5 years which would allow a review at the end of this period.

6. However, I have considered the proposed signs on their own merits and taken into account, as a material consideration, that Policy D4 of the East Devon Local Plan 2013 to 2031 (adopted January 2016) requires that advertisements are kept to a minimum, and amalgamated wherever possible, to avoid clutter which would detract from the character of the building and the street scene. In this case, two separate board signs are proposed on each set of posts. These signs would not be amalgamated and, for the reasons explained, their appearance would lead to clutter that would detract from the character of the area. This, in my mind, would lead to a harmful proliferation of signs at the entrance to the site and not accord with the requirements of Policy D4.

Conclusion

7. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the advertisement proposal would be detrimental to the visual amenity of the area and that the appeal should be dismissed.

David Wyborn

INSPECTOR