



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 September 2020 by Ben Phillips BSc MSc

Decision by K Taylor BSc Hons PGDip MRTPI

An Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1 October 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/X0360/Z/20/3250127

4a Longfield Road, Twyford RG10 9AS

- 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 Mrs Nihan Baker against the decision of Wokingham Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 200584, dated 4 March 2020, was refused by notice dated 31 March 2020.
 - The advertisement is described as a 900 x 3000mm. business banner displayed on bare hedge outside the property.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

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.

Main Issues

3. The main issues in this case are the effect of the proposed advertisement on the visual amenity of the area and public safety.

Reasons for Recommendation

Visual Amenity

4. The appeal property is an end of terrace dwelling located on the corner of Longfield Road and Hilltop Road, within a wider residential development. The proposed signage would be prominently located on a side boundary hedge, facing Longfield Road.
5. Whilst the hedging itself has a neutral impact on the wider street scene, the proposed banner sign, given its scale and location on a boundary hedge on the side of a residential property, would appear incongruous and out of keeping with the wider residential character of the terrace and street scene. On the opposite side of Longfield Road is a parade of commercial units which serve the wider residential area, and these have typical fascia signage. However, these are not comparable with the proposed sign given their siting, commercial use and appearance.

6. In light of the foregoing I conclude that the proposed advertisement would result in harm to the visual amenity of the area, contrary to the requirements of Policy TB19 of the Wokingham Borough Development Plan- Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (2014) (LP), which, along with paragraph 132 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), require advertisements to have no adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area.
7. The Council have also referred to the 'Borough Design Guide' however have not directed me to any particular paragraph. As such, I cannot give this any weight.

Public Safety

8. The hedge in which the signage would be located is set on the side boundary and the adjacent pavement. The appellant states that the banner would be securely fixed in place and the imposition of the standard conditions as set out in Schedule 2 of the 2007 Regulations should ensure that the banner sign is not displayed so as to endanger any person using the highway.
9. I therefore conclude that the proposed advertisement would not result in harm to public safety. There is therefore no conflict with the highway safety objectives of LP Policy TB19 and the Framework.

Other Matters

10. I note that the appellant is willing to modify the scale and positioning of the advertisement, however this should be taken up with the Council, and is not a matter for consideration under this appeal.

Recommendation

11. Whilst I have found that there would be no harm to public safety, this would not outweigh or mitigate the harm that would arise to visual amenity. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

B Phillips

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

12. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

K Taylor

INSPECTOR