



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 January 2021

by David Cross BA(Hons) PgDip(Dist) TechIOA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 January 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/E2734/Z/20/3260924

The Stray Ferret, Strayside House, 27 West Park, Harrogate HG1 1BJ

- 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 The Stray Ferret Ltd against the decision of Harrogate Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20/02222/ADV, dated 22 June 2020, was refused by notice dated 10 September 2020.
 - The advertisement proposed is banner fixed to gable wall.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. There is some variation in the description of the proposal as given on the application form, decision notice and subsequent appeal documents. I have taken the description in the heading above from the application form.
3. I saw that an advertisement reflecting the details on the submitted plans was in place at the time of my visit.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the amenity of the area with due regard to the Harrogate Conservation Area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site is located on a side wall of Strayside House, which is a relatively modern building of an understated character. The building includes a commercial frontage at ground floor level with associated advertising, and what appeared to be offices above.
6. The site is within the Harrogate Conservation Area (CA), and more specifically within the Town Centre Character Area which contains a variety of commercial and other buildings. The site is also within an Area of Special Control for Advertisements.
7. Despite the modern character of Strayside House, its understated design and the use of materials of a traditional appearance on parts of the building, including the flank wall on which the appeal advertisement is placed, mean that it has a neutral effect on the character and appearance of the CA. The

restriction of advertisements to the ground floor commercial frontage also contributes to this understated character, despite the strident appearance of some signage associated with the entrance to a parking area.

8. The appeal sign is not located on a commercial frontage and instead covers a significant area of a wall to the side of the building. This flank wall projects forward of the neighbouring buildings, and due to this arrangement and the scale of the sign, the appeal proposal appears as an over-prominent and jarring feature within the streetscape. As well as the harm arising from the scale of the sign, its projection above the signage at ground floor level on the commercial frontage adds to its unfortunate appearance.
9. The sign is also viewed in the context of the imposing neighbouring building of the Prince of Wales Mansions, and detracts from the contribution that this building makes to the character and appearance of the area. Even within the context of this town centre area containing a mixture of uses and building designs, the appeal proposal appears as an obtrusive feature which dominates views of the side of the host building.
10. Whilst it is not visible from in front of the building, it is prominent in views from the south, including medium to longer distance views from open space and busy highways. Even allowing for the screening effect of trees, the sign appears as a prominent and incongruous element within the streetscape.
11. The appellant refers to matters such as the colour of the sign, lack of illumination, surface treatment and the size of images and lettering. However, these matters do not mitigate for the unacceptable scale and location of the sign.
12. My attention has also been drawn to banner advertisements elsewhere in the area. However, I have not been provided with details of the circumstances that led to these advertisements gaining approval, including matters such as the policies and controls in place at that time as well as the site context. In any event, I saw that banner advertisements of this scale and arrangement are not a common feature in this area, and I have determined this appeal on its own merits.
13. I note the frustrations expressed by the appellant in relation to the level of communication from the Council leading up to this appeal. However, this is not a matter for this appeal which I have determined on its planning merits.
14. I have had regard to the benefits of the advertisement, including the support for the business. However, these benefits would not outweigh the significant harm that I have identified.
15. The proposal, due to its design and siting, would lead to significant harm to the appearance of the host building and the streetscape, and would not preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA. I therefore conclude that the proposal would lead to significant harm to the visual amenity of the area. I have taken into account policies HP2 and HP3 of the Harrogate District Local Plan 2020 which seek to protect or enhance conservation areas and local distinctiveness. Given that I have concluded that the proposal would harm visual amenity, the proposal conflicts with those policies. The proposal would also conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework with regards to achieving well-designed places.

16. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

David Cross

INSPECTOR