



Appeal Decision

Site Visit made on 9 February 2021

by Samuel Watson BA(Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 1 March 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/J3720/Z/20/3264291

Burnside Hotel, Church Lane, Shotton, Stratford Upon Avon, CV37 9HQ

- 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 Rakesh Singh against the decision of Stratford-on-Avon District Council.
 - The application Ref 20/02167/ADV, dated 10 August 2020, was refused by notice dated 7 October 2020.
 - The advertisement proposed is described as the installation of seven new illuminated and non-illuminated signs to the exterior of the building and boundary wall (retrospective).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I observed that the advertisement described above has already been installed. I have dealt with the appeal on that basis.

Main Issue

3. The Council found the proposal would have no harmful effects on public safety. As such, the main issue in this case is the effect of the proposal on the visual amenity of the street scene and the Shotton Conservation Area (SCA).

Reasons

4. The appeal site is located fairly centrally within the SCA on the west side of Church Lane. The Council's appraisal of the conservation area sets out its significance as stemming from its age, semi-rural nature and the presence of Anne Hathaway's Cottage. I found Church Lane to be largely characterised by mature trees and vegetation, with sporadic, traditional buildings set back from the road. However, Burnside Hotel abuts the back of the pavement and is therefore a very prominent feature within the street scene
5. Given its siting within a conservation area I am mindful of my duty under section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which sets out that special attention should be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

6. Burnside Hotel is a long, linear building with a vehicular access at either side. With the exception of sign J, a large name plaque on a side gable, the appeal signage is focused around these two accesses. As a result of their grouped siting they appear cluttered, jarring with the otherwise simple and limited detailing on the elevations visible in public views. This is exacerbated by the lack of consistency between the size and appearance of the signage and their prominent positioning. Although a level of advertising and other signage is to be expected on a commercial building, such as a hotel, the extent of the advertising present is out of scale with the host building and its semi-rural and historic setting, within the SCA. The use of sympathetic colours schemes for the advertising does not mitigate the harm identified above.
7. I find that the limited illumination associated with the signage is of a scale commensurate with the host building and its use, and is not harmful to the visual amenity of the street scene or SCA.
8. The appellant has raised that the signage supports the viability of the hotel, as well as other nearby businesses. However, no substantive evidence has been submitted to demonstrate that the signage has had an economic benefit for the site or surrounding area. Moreover, it has not been demonstrated that the signage is needed to identify the hotel or for pedestrian safety. I therefore find that these matters do not outweigh the harm to the visual amenity of the street scene or SCA.
9. In conclusion I find that the development is harmful to the visual amenity of the street scene and wider SCA. I have taken into account Policies CS.8 and CS.9 of the Stratford-on-Avon Core Strategy 2011 to 2031 and Policies BE1, BE5 and BE8 of the Stratford-upon-Avon Neighbourhood Development Plan 2011-2031. These policies seek high standards of design and the protection of heritage assets and so are material in this case. Given I have concluded that the proposal would harm amenity, the proposal conflicts with these policies. Moreover, in light of the above the proposal conflicts with paragraph 132 of the National Planning Policy Framework, which relates to advertisements.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.

Samuel Watson

INSPECTOR