



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 May 2021

by J Hunter BA(Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 4th June 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/H0724/Z/21/3270282

Land at Stockton Street facing Andrew Street, Hartlepool TS24 7NT

- 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 Hartlepool College of Further Education against the decision of Hartlepool Borough Council.
- The application Ref H/2020/0317, dated 27 August 2020, was refused by notice dated 29 January 2021.
- The advertisement proposed is the erection and display of a single, freestanding 48-sheet digital LED advertising unit.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The Council has drawn my attention to the policies it considers to be relevant to this appeal and I have taken them into account as a material consideration. However, powers under the Regulations to control advertisements may be exercised only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of any material factors. In my determination of this appeal, the Council's policies have not therefore, by themselves, been decisive.

Background and Main Issue

3. The Council raise no objection to the proposal from a public safety point of view. Subject to the imposition of planning conditions, I have no reason to disagree with this view. Therefore, the main issue is the effect of the proposal on the amenity of the area.

Reasons

4. It is proposed to erect a free-standing digital advertising unit which would sit on a singular steel support around 2.5 metres in height above ground level. The advertisement itself would be about 3 metres high by 6 metres wide, would include LED illumination and would be positioned against a relatively sparse backdrop of trees between on the corner of a large carpark and facing toward the A689 (Stockton Road), a busy thoroughfare through the town centre.
5. The proposal would be highly visible from Stockton Road. Owing to its substantial scale, position, overall height and use of illuminated colours, the advertisement would have a dominating and intrusive impact when viewed from Stockton Road. I acknowledge the appellant's submissions that there are examples of similar advertisements around the North East, particularly in urban locations such as this appeal site. Nonetheless, I noted during my site visit that

the area surrounding the appeal site has a distinct lack of large scale prominent advertisements. The advertisements that are visible are predominantly focal/gateway features or totem advertisements for local businesses which appear relatively discreet. In contrast, I consider that due to its scale and illumination, the proposed advertisement would be seen in stark contrast to the backdrop of the trees and the open carpark beyond and it would dominate this part of the street scene.

6. Consequently, I conclude that the proposed advertisement would cause significant harm to the amenity of the area. Therefore, it would not accord with Policies QP4 and QP8 of the Hartlepool Local Plan Document 2018 and chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 which collectively seek to achieve high quality places.

Conclusion

7. For the reasons outlined above and taking into account all other matters raised I conclude the appeal should be dismissed.

J Hunter

INSPECTOR