



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 15 February 2022

by M Russell BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25 February 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/E2734/Z/21/3287751

Wren Kitchens, Plumpton Park, Harrogate HG2 7LD

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (the Regulations) against a refusal to grant express consent.
 - The appeal is made by Wren Kitchens against the decision of Harrogate Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 21/04295/ADV, dated 29 September 2021, was refused by notice dated 22 November 2021.
 - The advertisement proposed was originally described as 'Consent to display 1No. Set of Internally illuminated letters to replace existing internally illuminated box'.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and express consent is granted for the display of internally-illuminated wall-mounted letters to front elevation as applied for. The consent is for five years from the date of this decision and is subject to the five standard conditions set out in the Regulations.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of the proposal set out in the banner heading above is taken from the application form but includes superfluous text including a reference to an existing advertisement. I have therefore used the more precise description given on the Council's decision notice for the purpose of my decision paragraph.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on the amenity of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal relates to a unit on a retail park currently occupied by Wren Kitchens. The host unit has a wide eaves structure and there is a prominent brick faced gable-like detail over its main entrance. Stone topped brick columns sit either side of the entrance. The information before me indicates that there is a semi-circular stonework feature centrally located within the gable, although this was obscured by a large rectangular fascia sign at the time of my site visit. Neighbouring units also include similar stone topped columns as well as gable-like features of varying design. Therefore, there is a pleasing sense of visual cohesion to the buildings on the retail park.
5. Existing advertisements on the host unit include rectangular fascia signs above the shop front windows and entrance. Advertisements on neighbouring buildings include, amongst others, a circular fascia sign at gable level over the

entrance of Homebase and individual lettering within a brick gable to the front elevation of Morrisons.

6. The individual acrylic lettering would sit centrally within the gable-like feature. This would ensure clear separation between the advertisement, the wide eaves and the stone topped columns. As the lettering would be individually mounted, the spaces between the letters would also allow for an appreciation of the brickwork and semi-circular stonework behind. In these respects, the proposal would not detract from the architecture of the building and therefore clearly differs from the large fascia board previously dismissed at appeal¹. Seen alongside the gable level advertisements on neighbouring buildings the simple design of the advertisement would sit comfortably within the streetscape even when illuminated.
7. The Council has drawn my attention to the Harrogate Borough Council Shopfronts Design Guide (1999) which amongst other things states that signs should not be displayed on gable ends and that the overall number of signs on a building should avoid a cluttered appearance to the building itself and the overall street scene. However, the advertisement before me relates to a gable feature above the main entrance rather than a gable end. In any case, even seen in combination with the existing fascia signage on the building, I am satisfied that the proposal has been carefully designed and would not appear cluttered.
8. To conclude, having regard to the site-specific factors set out, the advertisement would have an acceptable effect on the visual amenity of the area.
9. The Regulations make it clear that advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety. Whilst the Council's policies cannot by themselves be decisive, I have taken into account Policy HP3 of the Harrogate District Local Plan (2020) insofar as it seeks to protect local distinctiveness including the visual amenity of the area. Given that I have concluded that the proposal would have an acceptable effect on the visual amenity of the area, the proposal does not conflict with this policy.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons set out above and having regard to all matters raised, the appeal is allowed.

M Russell

INSPECTOR

¹ Appeal Ref APP/E2734/Z/20/3246962