



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 February 2024 by R Dickson BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

Decision by John Morrison BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 April 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/N1730/Z/23/3333908

**Eden Bookmakers, 54 High Street, Hartley Wintney, Hook, Hampshire
RG27 8NS**

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended) against a refusal to grant express consent.
 - The appeal is made by Betting Shop Operations Limited against the decision of Hart District Council.
 - The application Ref is 23/01049/ADV.
 - The advertisement proposed is for the retention of 1 no. externally illuminated fascia sign and 3 no. television screens.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Preliminary Matters

3. Given the description above, I have proceeded on the basis that retrospective express consent is sought through the appeal. There is also a discrepancy between the name of the shop on the application form and decision notice, in which it is referred to as Eden Bookmakers, and the appeal form, in which it is referred to as Jennings Bet. The address in the banner above is therefore as it appears on the original application form.

Main Issue

4. The effect of the proposal on the amenity of the area, with specific regard to the Hartley Witney Conservation Area (CA) and the setting of a listed building.

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. Hartley Wintney is a quaint but busy village. There are early 19th century small scale two and three storey buildings lining the high street, with active shop frontages in the ground floors. The CA Management Plan identifies the village centre as having mainly local shops. This is reflected in the types of small-scale advertisements, including un-illuminated and externally illuminated fascia boards and hanging swing boards. These features contribute positively to the traditional visual qualities of the street scene and thus the CA.

6. Most of the shops have signage which blends with the quaint vernacular of the buildings. It is unobtrusive with the majority appearing to be painted onto fascias or windows or with plastic or aluminium lettering. There are a few externally illuminated advertisements, as well as two shops which have digital ones. These are however near to the roundabout where the street is more open. The appeal site is the ground floor of a red brick end of terrace building, which has different architectural detail to those around it. It is situated adjacent the grade II listed Abbey National Building Society, which is described as being an early 19th century symmetrical building. There is an alleyway/driveway between the appeal site and the listed building. It is sited away from the other shops with digital advertisements.
7. The digital advertisements ('TV' screens) in the windows are a prominent addition to the frontage, and with black screening behind, do not integrate with the prevailing pattern of advertisements and active frontages that the other shops provide. Despite not being obvious in longer ranging views, the digital advertisements are a jarring addition to the quaint traditional vernacular of the High Street, owing in part to their brightness and vivid colours, which are not generally a feature of the immediate area. The fascia sign is less obtrusive, but the colours are unsympathetic to the street scene and the advert thus appears overly dominant. The combined effect is an overpowering one which, given their proximity, draws the eye from the architectural qualities of the listed building.
8. Consequently, the proposals result in unacceptable harm to the visual amenity of the area, having specific regard to the CA and the setting of a listed building. The Council has drawn my attention to Policies NBE8 and NBE9 of the Hart Local Plan 2032, Saved Policies GEN1 and URB24 of the Hart District Local Plan 1996-2006, and Policies HW5, HW6 and HW7 of the Hartley Wintney Neighbourhood Plan 2019 which collectively seek to ensure proposals do not harm the character of the area. Whilst I have taken them into account in so far as they are material considerations, they have not in themselves been decisive.

Other Matters

9. The procedure for advertisement consent does not extend to their effect on living conditions per se. If I were taking this into consideration and found it to be acceptable, it would be a lack of harm in any case and would not alter the outcome of the appeal. I have seen other examples of advertisements, including those at Costa Coffee and the Hartley Wintney Dental Clinic. The former has only one digital advertisement screen, and the latter are adjacent to the windows, as opposed to directly in the window. Examples have also been provided of similar fascia signs however, these have a different relationship with listed buildings. They do not therefore alter my conclusions.

Conclusion and Recommendation

10. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

R Dickson

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

11. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

John Morrison

INSPECTOR