
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 August 2024

by Nick Davies BSc(Hons) BTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 09 August 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/V1260/Z/24/3343504

Hurn Bridge Farm, Unit 3, Hurn Bridge, Christchurch BH23 6AD

- 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 Mrs Leanne Elliott (Westec Engineering Ltd) against the decision of Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Council.
 - The application Ref 8/23/0852/ADV, dated 21 November 2023, was refused by notice dated 7 March 2024.
 - The advertisement proposed is a wall mounted company name, logo and contact details.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and express consent is granted for the display of the wall mounted company name, logo and contact details 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.

Procedural Matters

2. The advertisement was already in position at the time of my visit.
3. The Council has referred to development plan policies in its reasons for refusal. Advertisement proposals can only be considered on the basis of amenity and public safety considerations. I have therefore taken the development plan policies into account only as far as they relate to these issues.

Main Issue

4. The Council's evidence does not contend that the advertisement would be harmful to public safety. From my consideration of all the evidence, including my site visit, I have no reason to disagree.
5. Consequently, the main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposal on the amenity of the area, including the character and appearance of the Hurn Conservation Area.

Reasons

6. The building on which the advertisement is displayed is a red brick former agricultural building with a hipped clay tiled roof. Despite being converted to a business use it retains its simple historic agricultural character, and the evidence indicates that it is a locally listed building. In assessing the impact on

amenity, the Planning Practice Guidance advises that, if the locality has important scenic, historic, architectural, or cultural features, the local planning authority should consider whether advertisements are in scale and in keeping with these features.

7. The building also lies within the Hurn Conservation Area (the CA). It is part of a former farm complex, which comprises a range of buildings based around a historic farmhouse. Although the buildings are now in business and equestrian use, the historic layout of the farmstead can still be perceived, and the buildings retain their original character. Indeed, the significance of this part of the CA lies in the integrity of the historic farmstead and its surrounding rural setting. The building, being largely intact in its original form, makes a positive contribution to this significance.
8. When considering the impact of an advertisement on amenity, section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.
9. The advertisement is modest in scale, non-illuminated, with small lettering, and is displayed flat against the building below the eaves. It does not cover any of the historic architectural features of the building and is broadly in alignment with the fenestration. Its black painted background is in keeping with the dark-stained timber doors and window frames. Although it is displayed on the wall of the building that faces the road, it is set a considerable distance back from the pavement, behind a hedgebank. As a result of all of these factors, the advertisement is not visually intrusive, and it does not harm the historic character of the building. Consequently, it does not diminish the contribution that the building makes to the significance of the CA.
10. I am mindful that there is also a fascia sign above the entrance door, and a hanging sign on the road frontage that relate to the same business. The fascia sign is very narrow, and largely in the shadow of the eaves. It is also separated, visually, from the proposed advertisement by a projecting buttress. Consequently, it does not result in a concentration of signage that is harmful to the character of the building. The hanging sign has the same design theme as those on the building, but it is set well apart from them, such that the three signs do not amount to a clutter of advertisements, and they do not harm the significance of the CA.
11. There are other hanging signs on the roadside hedgebank, and a number of advertisement boards on the boundary fence, but these are largely located around the entrance to the complex, to the east. I have not been provided with evidence relating to the legality of these, but as they form a discrete group, some distance away from the three signs relating to the appeal premises, they have little relevance to my consideration of the appeal proposal.
12. The Council's delegated report refers to advice in the National Planning Policy Framework regarding inappropriate development in the Green Belt, and the decision notice cites Policy KS3 of the Christchurch and East Dorset Local Plan Part 1 - Core Strategy 2014. However, the proposal is not a planning application for development, so these matters are not relevant to my consideration of the appeal.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the advertisement would not be harmful to amenity or public safety. Therefore, the appeal is allowed. I note that no non-standard conditions have been proposed and I consider that none are necessary.

Nick Davies

INSPECTOR