



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 August 2024

by Ian McHugh DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20 September 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/C1570/Z/24/3341963

Land to South of Radwinter Road, Saffron Walden, CB11 3HY

- 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 Endurance Estates (Saffron Walden) Ltd against the decision of Uttlesford District Council.
 - The application Ref is UTT/24/0104/AV.
 - The advertisement proposed is a flagpole sign.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. Following my query regarding the description of the appeal proposal and the response from the agent on 5 August 2024, I am satisfied that the description given in the banner heading above is correct.
3. The original application for advertisement consent included a number of other signs within the site and on the building. The Council issued a split decision in which it approved the other signage, but refused the flagpole sign. Consequently, this appeal relates to the flagpole sign only.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on the appearance of the streetscene and the impact on the amenity of the occupants of nearby dwellings.

Reasons

Streetscene

5. The appeal site is part of a new mixed use development site, which is under construction on land formerly occupied by an industrial use. The proposed internally illuminated flagpole sign would be positioned at the entrance to the site adjacent to Radwinter Road. The sign would advertise the food store (Lidl), which, at the time of my site visit, was under construction.
6. Radwinter Road is a busy road that leads to and from the town centre. In the vicinity of the appeal site, residential properties predominate and the Saffron Walden Conservation Area lies to the west. Signage is not a common characteristic in the vicinity of the appeal site, although during my site visit, I

did observe signs relating to another convenience store (Tesco) and also relatively small signs indicating a community hospital, both further to the east.

7. The Council contends that the proposed flagpole sign would have a detrimental impact on the streetscene, because of its design, size, scale and appearance. It's decision notice refers to a conflict with Policy GEN2 of the adopted Uttlesford Local Plan. This is a general design policy, which seeks to ensure (amongst other things) that proposals are compatible with the area. However, whilst the provisions of the Development Plan are a consideration, they are not determinative in respect of proposals for advertisement consent. These proposals are determined with regard to amenity and public safety.
8. The proposed flagpole sign would be approximately 6m high and it would be sited in a prominent position on the road frontage, close to the main access into the site. Whilst I acknowledge the need for advertising and identification at the entrance to developments, the proposed sign would appear overly dominant and at odds with the streetscene, because of its height and design. It would introduce a feature that is not common along this stretch of Radwinter Road and, therefore, it would appear out of context and harmful to the character and appearance of the area.

Residential Amenity

9. The Council also considers that the proposed flagpole sign would have a detrimental effect on the amenity of existing residents. I observed at my site visit that there is a row of residential properties located opposite the site of the proposed sign. Whilst the road provides a degree of separation, the flagpole sign would be a visually prominent feature, because of its height and overall design. In my opinion, it would detract from the outlook that is currently enjoyed by the occupants of the dwellings. Consequently, I share the Council's concerns.

Other Matter

10. Regarding public safety, I note that the Council does not object to the proposal on matters relating to the safety of traffic or other highway users. I have no reason to disagree with that assessment.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above, it is concluded that the appeal be dismissed.

Ian McHugh

INSPECTOR