



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 January 2025

by **M Clowes BA (Hons) MCD PG CERT (Arch Con) MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 February 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/N4720/Z/24/3358223

4 Market Place, Pudsey, Leeds LS28 7UA

- 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 Mr H Ahmadi against the decision of Leeds City Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/06202/ADV.
 - The advertisement proposed is described as 'fascia sign.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 and paragraph 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) confirm that advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts. Whilst the Council has drawn my attention to the policies it considers relevant to this appeal, and I have taken them into account as a material consideration, they have not, by themselves, been decisive.
3. The description in the banner heading above is taken from the planning application form, as there is no evidence before me that the appellant agreed to the altered description on the Council's decision notice. The advertisement was in situ at the time of my visit and I note that the application has been submitted retrospectively. I have considered the appeal on this basis.
4. The Council has referred to the Leeds City Council Advertising Design Guide, Supplementary Planning Document (ADG) 2006 in its reason for refusal, and extracts have been provided during the appeal process. The ADG advises that it does not cover signs, instead suggesting that they are covered by guidance in the Shopfronts Design Guide (SDG)¹. The SDG is not before me and the parties have not had the opportunity to comment on its applicability to the proposal. For these reasons, I have determined the appeal without reference to either of the documents.
5. In December 2024, the Government published a revision to the Framework. Although some sections and paragraph numbers have changed, the revisions do not relate to anything that is fundamental to the main issues in this appeal. The parties would not therefore be prejudiced by reference to the revised Framework.

¹ As set out at paragraph 1.4 of the Council's ADG.

Main Issue

6. Both parties agree that the advertisement would not harm public safety. Accordingly, the main issue is the effect of the advertisement on amenity, with particular regard to whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Pudsey Conservation Area (PCA).

Reasons

7. The appeal site lies within the PCA and forms part of a designated heritage asset. In accordance with the duty imposed by section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act), I am required to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA, so far as it relates to the consideration of amenity.
8. The significance of the PCA arises from its variation of character evolving from piecemeal development including high quality 19th century municipal and ecclesiastical buildings, planned open space and more recent development in the 1950's and 60's. The Pudsey Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (PCAAMP) 2009, advises that commercial and domestic buildings play an important role in establishing the character of the PCA.
9. The appeal site comprises a ground floor retail premises located in a prominent location opposite the public bus station. It forms part of a parade of shops identified as an opportunity for enhancement in the PCAAMP. As it is not recorded as either a positive or neutral building, this characterisation appears to suggest that the host building is already considered as a detractor within the CA. From my observations the red brick and 2 storey flat roofed form does appear incongruous amongst the honey-coloured sandstone and pitched slate roofs found elsewhere within the PCA. Any alterations to the building should therefore enhance and not worsen the current situation.
10. A black aluminium box fascia sign has been added above the modern ground floor shop unit within the parameters of the shop front. However, it is highly detailed including multiple logos and descriptions of products sold, in addition to the shop name. This presents a cluttered appearance that is added to by the presence of the external box shutter and distending floodlights. Protruding from the front elevation of the building, its bulky appearance is worsened by the additional projecting lettering and logos which stand out incongruously. This is a feature I note that is not prevalent on other fascia signs nearby. When internally lit, the dominance of the bulky lettering and logos would be further exacerbated, particularly given the perforated metal holes to their sides which would appear to allow a greater degree of light spillage.
11. There are varying degrees of quality fascia signs within the PCA. A good proportion of shop fronts have signs with traditional lettering and external lighting. Nonetheless, there are a number of poor examples of modern box fascia's which are cumulatively contributing to the erosion of the quality of the street scene, a view I note is shared by interested parties. The appellant has drawn my attention to the signage at the adjacent Greggs premises. I have not been provided with any details of the context in which that advertisement consent was granted. However, even if internally lit, I find it materially different to the advert before me. It does not extend across the full width of the fascia and it consists of only the shop name and its logo, neither of which project in addition to the box sign.

12. The Council also advises that the fascia sign to the premises at No 6 Market Place does not have advertisement consent. This is not disputed by the appellant. The presence of incongruous signage is not sufficient justification to allow more, particularly in light of the site's location within the PCA and the requirements of the Act.
13. For the above reasons, I conclude that the advertisement unacceptably harms the visual amenity of the area and fails to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the PCA. Although the harm would be localised and limited given the scale of the advertisement, such negative impacts cumulatively erode the quality of the CA as a whole.
14. The advertisement therefore fails to satisfy the statutory requirements of the Act. It also conflicts with Policies P10 and P11 of the Leeds Core Strategy (2019) and saved Policies BD8, BD9 and GP5 of the Leeds Unitary Development Plan Review (2006). Insofar as these policies are relevant as a material consideration, they require the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment and that new signs are well designed and sensitively located within the street scene. Further conflict is also found with paragraph 141 of the Framework which acknowledges that the quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons identified above, the appeal is dismissed.

M Clowes

INSPECTOR