
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 March 2025

by Lewis Condé BSc, MSc, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 6 May 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Y2620/Z/25/3359560

27 Station Road, Sheringham, Norfolk NR26 8RF

- 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 Yusuf Soyuturk against the decision of North Norfolk District Council.
 - The application Ref is ADV/24/2127.
 - The advertisement proposed a fascia sign with internal illumination and a hanging sign also with internal illumination.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The proposed fascia and projecting signs have been installed at the site. On my site visit I observed the site before, during and after dusk and so viewed the signage in different lighting conditions. However, during my site visit only the internal illumination of appellant's hanging sign was in operation.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal property is a pizza takeaway restaurant on Station Road, within the Sheringham Conservation Area (the CA). Station Road leads on to High Street and is one of the key routes into Sheringham town centre and the heart of the CA. At ground floor level uses along the street are predominantly retail and commercial.
5. In so far as it relates to this appeal, the significance of the CA is derived from its busy commercial character, and the traditional appearance of buildings, their complementary form and features, and the contribution that this makes to the area.
6. Being a commercial centre there is an array of shopfronts and signage throughout this part of Sheringham. Nonetheless, signage mainly appeared to be restrained in scale and appearance, including through its illumination. Indeed, from my observations, signage appeared to share a high degree of design and illumination consistency. Notably, fascia signage was often lit by external trough lighting. Where examples of internally illuminated fascia signs were present, these tended to be limited in scale or only small proportions of the signs were illuminated, such that they do not appear brash to passers-by.

7. Consequently, there is a sense of subtlety and restraint to much of the signage within the CA. The importance of this is reflected in the North Norfolk Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (adopted 2008), which highlights the low-key nature of advertisements within North Norfolk's market and coastal towns and emphasises that illumination of signage should be discrete in nature.
8. The height of the appeal property's fascia sign is rather considerable in comparison to the fascia's on neighbouring shopfronts. Furthermore, the size of the lettering overwhelms the appeal property's fascia, such that it has a dominant appearance and is at odds with the character of nearby signage. My principal concern though is with the proposed internal illumination of this sign. Given the scale of the lettering and their extent of coverage across the fascia, when internally lit, I consider it would appear as a highly prominent, inharmonious and visually intrusive feature in the streetscene.
9. Turning to the hanging sign, although not a traditional hanging board sign, it remained comparable in size and shape to other projecting signs that I observed within the CA, including those highlighted by the appellant. Nevertheless, and notwithstanding that one of the hanging signs raised by the appellant does not benefit from advertisement consent, I found the appeal proposal was not directly comparable to these other examples. This is due to the extent of the sign that is illuminated, which results in a rather stark, discordant, and inharmonious feature compared to the more subtle nature of surrounding advertisements.
10. The appellant has indicated a willingness to adjust the lighting level of the signage, and states that he has already co-operated with the Council in this regard. Still, this does not overcome my above concerns with the appeal scheme.
11. Bringing the above together, I find the appeal scheme to cause harm to the visual amenity of the area and to be detrimental to the character and appearance of the Sheringham Conservation Area. In so far as they are relevant, the appeal scheme therefore conflicts with Policies EN4 and EN8 of the North Norfolk Core Strategy (adopted 2008) and the advice of the SPD. Together these policies and guidance seek to promote high-quality design that reinforces local distinctiveness, as well as conserves or enhances the character and appearance of designated heritage assets. Likewise, the proposal conflicts with the aims of the Framework, in respect of achieving well designed places and protecting the historic environment.

Other Matters

12. The signage may offer benefits to both the business and members of the public, including in relation to wayfinding and public safety, as well as improving the viability of the business. However, these factors do not provide sufficient justification to allow advertisements that cause the harm described above.

Conclusion

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

Lewis Condé
INSPECTOR