



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 June 2025

by K Reeves BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 05 August 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/D1265/Z/25/3358573

11 Shore Road, Swanage, Dorset BH19 1DA

- 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 Holland of J. Holland & Sons Ltd against the decision of Dorset Council.
 - The application Ref is P/ADV/2024/06115.
 - The advertisement proposed is erection of replacement fascia signs on north and east elevation.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and express consent is granted for the erection of replacement fascia signs on north and east elevation at 11 Shore Road, Swanage, Dorset, BH19 1DA in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref P/ADV/2024/06115. The consent is for five years from the date of this decision and is subject to the five standard conditions set out in Schedule 2 of the 2007 Regulations and the following additional conditions:
 - 1) The intensity of the illumination of the advertisement permitted by this consent shall be no greater than 300 cd/m².
 - 2) The advertisement permitted by this consent shall not be illuminated by flashing or intermittent lighting.
 - 3) The advertisement permitted by this consent shall only be illuminated during the opening hours of the premises to which it relates.

Preliminary Matter

2. The Regulations require that decisions are made only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of any material factors. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and the Planning Practice Guidance reiterate this approach. Therefore, while I have referred to some of the policies and guidance that the Council considers to be relevant to this appeal, these have not been decisive in my determination of this appeal.

Background and Main Issue

3. The appellant submitted an advertisement consent application for the erection of fascia signs that comprised plain blue fascia panels on the front elevation of the appeal building and the replacement of an existing fascia sign on the side of the building. The Council refused the application in December 2024 but the reason for refusal did not refer to the plain blue fascia panels and the Council's officer report confirms that that element of the proposal is acceptable. The focus of the appeal is therefore on the replacement fascia sign on the side elevation.

4. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the proposed sign on amenity.

Reasons

5. The appeal site is located within the Swanage Conservation Area (CA). The Swanage Conservation Area Appraisal Document (adopted 2008) indicates that the significance of the CA is derived from the special architectural and historic interest of the CA, the composite nature of the Swanage townscape which provides interest across several historical periods, and the fusion of architectural forms and styles frequently underscored by the changing application of locally sourced materials and vernacular traditions in their construction.
6. Given the site's location in the CA, I am mindful of my statutory duty under Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA.
7. The appeal site is also within the Dorset National Landscape (DNL). In accordance with the Framework, great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Landscapes.
8. The appeal building consists of a flat roofed amusement arcade that was constructed in the 1970s and remodelled in the 1990s. There is an element of Edwardian built form but that is set back behind the flat roofed section of the building. Given the form and finish of the section of the building that fronts Shore Road, the amusement arcade does not make a positive contribution towards the significance of the CA.
9. The proposed sign would have an acceptable appearance as it would match the other signage on the building and the sign it would replace has a striking colour scheme that is not particularly harmonious with the character and appearance of the CA. Moreover, given that the proposal would replace an existing sign of a similar size, it would not result in clutter on the building. The area of concern for the appeal is therefore the impact of the proposed illumination of the sign on amenity.
10. As the lighting on the proposed sign is not likely to be on during the daytime, the consideration of the effect on visual amenity from the proposal is limited to the illumination of the sign during the nighttime. The Council's officer report contains photographs of the site and its surroundings from the daytime and nighttime. They show that the elevation of the building where the sign would be located is dark at night. However, there is a large building in the background that has significant amounts of illumination that draw the eye. Further, there are numerous forms of street lighting adjacent to the site and the lighting on the front of the appeal building also adds to the eye-catching illuminations when stood on the seafront looking towards the site
11. The proposed sign would be a relatively small addition to the building and there would be a restriction on its level of illumination secured through a suitably worded planning condition. Furthermore, the site is in an area of the town that already has high levels of artificial illumination at nighttime. As such, the introduction of the proposed illuminated sign would not result in a material degradation of the existing visual amenity of the site and its surroundings. I acknowledge that the sign would be at a higher level on the building than the main band of fascia signage across

the building, but this would not be discernible during the night due to the signage below on that elevation not being illuminated.

12. The proposed sign would therefore have a neutral impact on the significance of the CA. As such, the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the CA. Furthermore, given that the illumination of the sign would not harm visual amenity and having regard to the sign replacing existing incongruous signage, the proposal would conserve and enhance the landscape and scenic beauty of the DNL.
13. For these reasons, the proposal would not cause material harm to amenity. Consequently, the proposal would comply with Policies E1, E2, E12 of the Purbeck Local Plan 2018 – 2034, which seek, in part, for development to positively integrate with its surroundings, protect, and where possible enhance, designated heritage assets and conserve and enhance the landscape and scenic beauty of the protected landscape. The proposal would also not conflict with the Purbeck Design Guide (2014), insofar as it seeks to prevent advertisements from appearing as visually dominating or incongruous within the site's context and avoid illuminated signs resulting in adverse impacts upon amenity.

Conditions

14. I have considered the Council's proposed conditions against the six tests set out in the Framework and Planning Practice Guidance and made changes to the wording to improve precision and enforceability as appropriate.
15. In addition to the five standard conditions set out in the Regulations, conditions stipulating the maximum intensity of the illumination, preventing flashing illumination, and restricting the time that the sign is illuminated are reasonable and necessary in the interests of visual amenity.
16. Given that there is no dispute regarding the approved plans, a non-standard condition listing the approved drawings is not necessary. As no issue has been raised in regards of the effect of the illumination on highway safety, based on the details shown on the submitted plans, a condition requiring the positioning and screening of the illumination to direct it away from the road is also not necessary.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons given above, I find that the proposal would not harm the amenity of the area. Accordingly, the appeal should be allowed and express consent granted subject to the further specified conditions.

K Reeves

INSPECTOR