



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 August 2019

by C Beeby BA (Hons) MIPROW

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29 November 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/Y2620/Z/19/3230374

Dormy House Hotel, Cromer Road, West Runton NR27 9QA

- 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 Mr S Brundle against the decision of North Norfolk District Council.
 - The application Ref ADV/19/0324, dated 25 February 2019, was refused by notice dated 8 May 2019.
 - The advertisement proposed is a non-illuminated blue sign with white lettering, supported by two 200mm x 200mm timber posts.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. The assessment of proposals under the above Regulations is confined to the issues of amenity and public safety. Therefore the issue of whether the proposal would support the appellant's business is not a matter which I am able to take into account in determining the appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the appeal proposal on the amenity of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is a section of driveway to the front of the Dormy House hotel. The proposed advertisement would be sited adjacent to the footway along Cromer Road. An advertisement is currently in position at the site. The proposal would replace it with an advertisement which would be very similar in most respects, but which would be approximately 10 centimetres lower.
5. The surrounding area comprises open fields with a backdrop of coast, with some limited development along the road. Woodland and allotments lie opposite the hotel. As a result, the area has a spacious and semi-rural appearance.
6. Views of the village of West Runton are available from the highway approaching the site. These are generally uninterrupted and include the church, dwellings and the wooded backdrop of the village. As a result, they contribute a semi-rural and non-commercial quality to the appearance of the area.

7. Four additional signs advertise the hotel adjacent to or on the footway. These have a limited height and scale. An advertisement for a local attraction lies in an adjacent field, but has a lower height than that proposed. A small village name sign lies on the opposite side of the road. The limited scale and height of the existing advertisements and signage contribute positively to the spacious and semi-rural appearance of the area.
8. Although the proposed advertisement is marginally lower than that which currently exists, it would continue to have a significantly greater height and scale than that of surrounding advertisements and signage. It would be located immediately adjacent to the highway. Views of the scheme from the footway and adjacent carriageway would be uninterrupted due to these factors. The proposed advertisement would consequently be prominent within such views.
9. The advertisement would interrupt views of the village church, roofs and wooded backdrop when approaching West Runton, and would consequently compete with the semi-rural and non-commercial appearance of the village.
10. The advertisement would additionally appear unduly prominent within views when leaving West Runton. As a result, it would detract from the spacious and semi-rural appearance of the area.
11. Furthermore, the advertisement would have undue dominance in comparison with the unobtrusive nature of other signage in the vicinity. This incongruity would contribute negatively to the amenity of the area.
12. The proposal would therefore have a harmful effect on the amenity of the area, as a result of its scale and form. I have taken into account paragraph 8.3.1 of the North Norfolk Supplementary Planning Document – Design Guide (2008), which seeks to protect amenity and so is material in this case. Given that I have concluded that the proposal would harm amenity, the proposal conflicts with this guidance.

Other Matters

13. My attention has been drawn to examples of other advertisements in the wider area. Whilst limited details of the circumstances of these schemes are before me, they all have a more urban setting than the appeal site. Thus, I consider that the circumstances of those proposals are materially different from those currently before me. However, even if the other schemes and circumstances were similar, it is unlikely that they would provide an example that should inevitably be followed even if harm would result from the appeal proposal. Thus, I attach only minimal weight to the relevance of the other schemes in determining the appeal.
14. The submission that the scale and height of the proposed advertisement is necessary in order to protect highway safety is unsupported by any substantive evidence. Thus, it is a matter to which I attach only minimal weight.
15. The position of the Council on previous schemes at the site has only minimal relevance to the appeal scheme, which I have determined on its individual planning merits.

16. I have had regard to other matters raised including concerns about highway safety. However, as I am dismissing the appeal on the main issue for the reasons given above, I have not pursued these matters further.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

C Beeby

INSPECTOR