The Planning Inspectorate

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 May 2018

by Siobhan Watson BA(Hons) MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 31st May 2018

Appeal Ref: APP/B3438/Z/18/3195836
5 to 6 Market Place, Leek, ST13 5HH

- 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 David Hyde against the decision of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council.
- The application Ref SMD/2017/0388, dated 5 June 2017, was refused by notice dated 18 December 2017.
- The advertisement proposed is a 600mm back halo and front lit (text only) sign.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the proposed sign would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area.

Reasons

3. The advert which has previously been displayed was no longer on the outside of the building at the time of my visit.

4. The appeal site is a white rendered building within the Leek Conservation Area which is characterised by its shopping streets and historic buildings. The appeal building is set within a public square which contains a variety of retail and food and drink uses. Signs in Market Place tend to be non- illuminated or externally illuminated. Although small, the sign, as proposed on the fascia of the building, would be prominent and the internal illumination would make it strident and incongruous with its historic and traditional surroundings.

5. I appreciate that the appellant has already bought the sign and did not know that consent was required. I also understand the benefits of drawing attention to the business. However, these matters do not outweigh the harm I have found. Whilst the appellant says that such signs have been erected in other locations, I have judged the proposal upon its own merits taking into account its specific context.

6. The Council has drawn my attention to the policies they consider to be relevant to this appeal and I have taken them into account as a material consideration. However, powers under the Regulations to control advertisements may be exercised only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of

any material factors. In my determination of this appeal, the Council's policies have not therefore, by themselves, been decisive.

7. I conclude that the sign would neither preserve, let alone enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area and I dismiss the appeal.

Siobhan Watson

INSPECTOR