
Penderfyniad ar yr Apêl

Ymweliad â safle a wnaed ar 24 October 2022

gan Nia Jones, BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

Arolygydd a benodir gan Weinidogion Cymru

Dyddiad: 15/11/2022

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 24 October 2022

by Nia Jones, BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Welsh Ministers

Date: 15/11/2022

Appeal Ref: CAS-02076-B6X1G9

Site address: Land at Former Hand Inn Hotel, 85 Holt Road, Wrexham, LL13 8NG

The Welsh Ministers have transferred the authority to decide this appeal to me as the appointed Inspector.

- The appeal is made under Regulation 15 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992 against a refusal to grant express consent.
- The appeal is made by Alight Media Ltd. against the decision of Wrexham County Borough Council.
- The advertisement proposed is a freestanding 48 sheet sized digital LED advertising unit.

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed advertisement on visual amenity.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located on Holt Road, which is a wide and busy transport corridor leading towards the town centre. This road is residential in character on its southern side, occupied by dense red-brick terraced dwellings of similar scale and form. Similar dwellings line Borrass Road. A limited number of small-scale commercial premises are largely concentrated in a compact triangular area of land between Holt Road and Borrass Road.
4. The advertisement unit would be located on the southern edge of this commercial triangle, near the footway, alongside open grassed areas, and car parks. In the view from the east, it would be seen partly against the nearby convenience store and post office on the brow of the hill. This building displays proportionately scaled fascia and poster advertisements. However, given the building's size, form, and similar external brick finish

to local housing, it has a domestic scale sympathetic to its surroundings. Although other commercial units are present nearby, they are mostly set away from the road and are also of a small scale and display similarly scaled advertisements. The former hotel premises, although a large building partly in use as offices, is not overtly commercial in appearance.

5. In contrast, the proposed advertisement unit would be a large and conspicuous feature in the streetscene. Seen from the junction of Hullah Road, its appearance would be of a substantial freestanding structure, prominent on its open site. Due to its length and height, the unit would dominate the view of the close form of the terrace of dwellings at Borrás Road behind it. In the reverse view from Borrás Road towards Holt Road, the unit would rise up above existing boundary features, where its tall and wide expanse would be at odds with the simple and compact scale of the terraced dwellings opposite.
6. I saw that the highway is wide and well-lit and that some commercial premises within the central triangle have illuminated static advertisements, which would be visible from some nearby dwellings when in operation. Although directly visible from fewer dwellings to the south due to its intended orientation, the proposed advertisement unit would nevertheless be continuously illuminated. It would continually display consecutive images and whilst I acknowledge night-time luminance levels could be controlled by condition, these features, together with its large scale, would make the unit more prominent than existing commercial signage nearby.
7. My attention was drawn to appeal decisions in relation to two other proposals at nearby Regent Street (APP/H6955/H/20/3261337 and APP/H6955/H/21/3275061) but these differ in context and circumstances. I have also taken into account a consent granted in Hereford (application 213317). The siting of that proposal is near the roundabout entrance to a retail park and is not directly comparable to the appeal proposal.
8. I acknowledge the sustainability and economic benefits of advertising in general, but this should be balanced with the effects on amenity and the harmful effects that I have identified in this regard are overriding considerations. I conclude that the proposal would harm the visual amenity of the area. In reaching this conclusion, I have taken into account, as material considerations, national planning policy advice, UDP Policies PS2 and GDP1 and the advice in the Council's Local Planning Guidance Note No.1 'Advertisements'.

Other Matters

9. I have taken into account the concerns raised by interested parties in relation to the potential distraction to motorists and highway safety matters. I note that the Highway Authority raised no concerns and from my own observations and the evidence before me, I do not consider that unacceptable risk to public safety would arise.

Conclusion

10. For the above reasons, and having regard to all matters raised, the appeal is dismissed.
11. In reaching my decision I have taken into account the requirements of sections 3 and 5 of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. I consider this decision is in accordance with the Act's sustainable development principle through its contribution towards one or more of the Welsh Minister's wellbeing objectives as required by section 8 of the Act.

Nia Jones

Inspector

