



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 October 2013

by M Brookes BA MSc MRTPI

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

Decision date: 28 October 2013

Appeal Ref: APP/Q1445/H/13/2202823

Co-operative Food Store, 87-89 Lustrells Vale, Saltdean, Brighton, East Sussex, BN2 8FA

- 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 the Co-operative Food Group against the decision of Brighton and Hove City Council.
 - The application Ref BH2013/01173, dated 11 April 2013, was partly approved and partly refused by notice dated 17 June 2013.
 - The advertisement proposed that was refused is a fascia sign to the side elevation, externally illuminated by an overhead trough light.
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Background

1. The appeal application was the subject of a split decision in which proposals for an externally illuminated fascia sign and internally illuminated projecting sign on the front elevation were approved. This appeal therefore relates solely to the sign for which consent was refused.

Decision

2. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

3. The main issue in this case is the effect of the sign on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is on an end of one of two staggered shopping parades. These parades generally face onto housing and are within a residential area.
5. The shops and other businesses in the parades have fascia signs and a few have projecting signs on their front elevations. The side walls at the ends of the parades do not have shop fronts with fascia signs above, except for a laundrette which has windows and a sign comprising individual non-illuminated letters facing towards a small car parking area. The commercial premises are therefore clearly advertised, but the signage is not unduly strident or obtrusive and generally does not impinge on the residential character and appearance of the surrounding area.
6. An exception to that pattern of signage is the display of six banner-type signs on the flank wall of the appeal property. These front onto School Lane, which

provides access to the rear of the shopping parade, to a parking area behind flats at Mayfield Court and to the Saltdean CP School. They are visible not only from the lane and from windows in the side of the flats at Mayfield Court, but also from Lustrells Vale.

7. The proposed sign would be located along this flank wall and close to the front of the building. In this location it would be particularly prominent in views from the south along Lustrells Vale because the front part of the store projects closer to the road than the building at Mayfield Court. It would not represent part of a shopfront, but would add to the existing clutter of signs comprising the banner signs on the flank wall and the forward-projecting sign on the front of the building. In addition, it would be a strident commercial feature in the street scene, uncharacteristically introducing externally illuminated signage on a side wall of one of the parades which faces over the open frontages and balconies of residential properties in Mayfield Court.
8. The sign would therefore unacceptably harm the character and appearance of the area.
9. I have noted the appellant's submission that the sign is important for public safety because cars park down the side of the building and because it would make the store more noticeable when driving up Lustrells Way. However, there is street lighting in School Lane and the store is at least as visible as all other premises in the parade, having a long, deep frontage fascia and a prominently sited projecting sign. Furthermore, as part of a parade of shops and other premises that essentially provide services for the surrounding area, potential customers will be well aware of the location of the parades and of the store. I therefore see no need for the sign on public safety grounds.
10. The Council has referred to Policy QD12 of the Brighton and Hove Local Plan 2005. The Regulations require that decisions are made only in the interests of amenity and, where applicable, public safety. Therefore the Council's policy alone cannot be decisive. However, I have taken it into account as a material consideration in my determination of the appeal.
11. For the reasons set out above, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

M Brookes

INSPECTOR