



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 September 2006

by **D B Leeming**

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

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Date

27 SEP 2006

Appeal Ref: APP/R1845/H/06/1199644

Land at junction of Sugar Loaf Lane and Beech Tree Lane, Iwerley, Kidderminster, Worcestershire

- 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 Mr and Mrs L A Partridge against the decision of Wyre Forest District Council.
- The application Ref 06/0529/ADVE, received by the Council on 12 May 2006, was refused by notice dated 20 June 2006.
- The advertisement proposed is a non-illuminated directional sign.

Summary of Decision: The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

1. The main issue in this appeal is the visual impact of the proposed sign at the site and within the surroundings.

Planning Policy and Precedent

2. The Council refer to Policies AD.1 and AD.5 of their Adopted Local Plan. The Regulations require that decisions be made only in the interests of amenity and, where applicable, public safety. Therefore the Council's policy alone cannot be decisive. But I have taken it into account as a material consideration in my determination of the appeal.
3. I note the Council's concern that a grant of consent for the sign within the highway boundary, aside from the question of legality, would set a precedent resulting in a proliferation of similar signs to the detriment of public safety. However, I consider that, had I been minded to grant advertisement consent, the Council would not have been prevented from dealing with any subsequent applications for signs elsewhere on their individual merits. Any such signs would, of course, also require consent from the highway authority, as landowner, in addition to any advertisement consent granted. I note from the application form that the appellant's state that they have received such consent in respect of the appeal sign, although the Council, say, in their statement, that the highway authority has objected to the proposal.

Reasons

4. The appeal sign would measure 0.91m by 0.6m. It would be mounted on posts directly behind a road name sign, to be seen above it. The sign would have an overall height of about 1.8m. It would be constructed of timber and contain black lettering and a directional arrow on a cream background.

5. The submitted drawing 0874:20, although not to scale, shows the sign to be set in a corner position alongside the boundary hedge of a field, some way back from the road name sign. However, at the time of my site visit, the latter was directly alongside the hedge, in the approximate position indicated on the drawing for the appeal sign.
6. Although the sign would not be particularly large, the verge is shallow and the sign, in its exposed corner location, would be a conspicuous feature at the junction. Extending to a height of 1.8 metres, it would be at least as tall as the hedge when not trimmed and noticeably taller when it was trimmed. Despite the presence of some nearby residential properties along Sugar Bush Lane, the sign would be viewed in a rural setting, against the immediate backdrop of the countryside hedge and a tree behind. The longer view would be of the field and further trees beyond. In addition to its exposure at the junction, the sign would be visible from the larger nearby junction with the main Kidderminster to Stourbridge road, across the wide grass verge to the south of this junction.
7. In the above circumstances, I consider that the sign would look out of place and be an intrusive feature on this corner location and within the surroundings. Given the presence of the road name sign and of another pole-mounted road sign on the verge warning of pedestrians in the road, I consider too that the sign would give rise to a local impression of clutter and signage excess at the junction.

Other Matters

8. The appellants say there is a commercial need for the proposed sign. I accept that outdoor advertising can play an important part in encouraging small business and in attracting trade. However, the Regulations require decisions to be made only in the interests of amenity and public safety. Therefore it is these factors, rather than commercial need, that must be decisive in my decision.

Conclusions

9. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the display of the appeal sign would be detrimental to the interests of amenity.

Formal decision

10. I dismiss the appeal.

David Leeming

Advertisement Appeals Inspector