
Penderfyniad ar yr Apêl

Ymweliad â safle a wnaed ar 19/01/16

gan Alwyn B Nixon BSc(Hons) MRTPI
Arolygydd a benodir gan Weinidogion Cymru
Dyddiad:9/2/16

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19/01/16

by Alwyn B Nixon BSc(Hons) MRTPI
an Inspector appointed by the Welsh Ministers
Date:9/2/16

Appeal Ref: APP/E6840/H/15/3139922

Site address: The Two Rivers, Hilltop, Newport Road, Chepstow NP16 5BT

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 Marston's PLC against the decision of Monmouthshire County Council.
 - The application Ref DC/2015/00821, dated 1 July 2015, was refused by notice dated 29 October 2015.
 - The advertisements proposed are 2 internally illuminated wall signs of folded aluminium acrylic & vinyl in blue, black and white, dimensions: Sign A 1.3m x 1.3m x 0.1m and Sign B 2.5m x 2.5m x 0.1m; and 1 internally illuminated totem sign (Sign D) of folded aluminium acrylic & vinyl in blue, black and white of dimension 3.5m x 1.0m x 0.325m.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and express consent is granted for 2 internally illuminated wall signs of folded aluminium acrylic & vinyl in blue, black and white, dimensions: Sign A 1.3m x 1.3m x 0.1m and Sign B 2.5m x 2.5m x 0.1m; and 1 internally illuminated totem sign (Sign D) of folded aluminium acrylic & vinyl in blue, black and white of dimension 3.5m x 1.0m x 0.325m, in accordance with application Ref DC/2015/00821 dated 1 July 2015 as subsequently amended to exclude an internally illuminated wall sign on the south west elevation (Sign C), for a period of five years from the date of this decision and subject to the standard conditions set out in the Regulations and the following additional condition:

The consent relates only to Signs A, B and D shown on the submitted site plan. Signs A, B and D shall be displayed in accordance with the details on the submitted drawings (site plan and drawings 113234/A) and application.

Procedural Matter

2. Before being determined by the Council the application was amended to remove Sign C. In the light of this I have imposed the additional condition above, to properly define the consent now granted.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on amenity.
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Reasons

4. The advertisement regulations and guidance in Technical Advice Note 7 Outdoor Advertisement Control provide for control of the display of advertisements in the interests of amenity and public safety. The Council's reason for refusal refers solely to matters of amenity. The relevant highway authority has raised no objections from a highway safety perspective and there are no other public safety issues. Policies in the Monmouthshire County Council Local Development Plan (LDP) require, amongst other things, that advertisements do not cause unacceptable clutter and that development has regard to local amenity, including that of neighbouring occupiers.
5. The appeal site fronts the main A48 route through Chepstow. The site was previously occupied by a larger hotel building but has been recently redeveloped to accommodate the present hotel lodge building and adjacent pub restaurant building. The site's commercial nature is reflected in existing signage associated with the pub restaurant, external lighting and parking areas around the buildings. Nearby development is mostly residential; however, a Countrywide retail store and petrol filling station adjoin the other side of the road a short way to the south west. The locality thus has something of a mixed character, with significant levels of activity.
6. Sign A is modestly proportioned and would be affixed to a small gable on the north east elevation of the hotel lodge, facing across the parking area in front of the pub restaurant towards the highway approach from the east. Sign B would be high on the main gable of the hotel lodge, facing directly towards the A48. Whilst larger than sign A, I do not consider its size excessive in relation to this elevation. The proposed totem sign would be positioned at the south west corner of the building, with the display facing along the highway approaches.
7. Taken together, the three signs would not be excessive or produce an effect of visual clutter. Notwithstanding their size, the impact of the illumination would be relatively subdued, since much of their surface areas comprise dark background. I consider that the signs relate acceptably to the scale of the building and reasonably reflect the need to clearly advertise the presence of the hotel lodge facility to approaching drivers whilst respecting the character and appearance of the locality. The totem sign, at 3.5m in height, would have much less impact in the street scene than the nearby petrol filling station totem, which is approximately 6m high. Whilst there are residential properties close to the site, including Larkfield House directly across the A48, the signs would not have any adverse effect on the living conditions of occupants of these properties.
8. Overall, I conclude that the proposed signs would not give rise to visual clutter. They would satisfactorily complement the buildings on the site and their use, and would not harm the character and appearance of the locality or the amenity of neighbouring residential occupiers. Consequently there would be no harm to this "gateway" approach to Chepstow town centre. As such, the proposals would not harm amenity, and would accord with LDP policies DES3 and EP1.
9. For the reasons given, and having taken account of all matters raised, I allow the appeal.

Alwyn B Nixon

Inspector