

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 September 2016

by Ray Wright BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 22 September 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/Z/16/3153880

Land north of Woolwich Road and west of Gallions Road, Charlton, London SE7 7SA

- 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 Sainsbury's Supermarkets Ltd against the decision of the Council of the Royal Borough of Greenwich.
 - The application Ref 15/2898/A, dated 16 September 2015, was refused by notice dated 11 May 2016.
 - The advertisements proposed were 'A1 food store signage including 3 x skysigns and 5 totems.'
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Procedural Matter

1. The description of the advertisements applied for, as set out above, is taken from the application form. However, the Council issued a split decision in relation to the scheme, and consent was granted for a variety of signage including 3 'sky signs' and 3 totem signs. The appeal relates only to the refusal of consent for two 10m high totem signs and I have dealt with the appeal on this basis. These two signs are already in place.

Decision

2. The appeal is allowed and express consent for the display of the two totem signs as applied for is granted. The consent is for five years from the date of this decision and is subject to the five standard conditions set out in the Regulations and the following additional conditions:-
 - 1) The luminance of the signage, hereby approved, shall not exceed 300Cd/m² during the hours of darkness.
 - 2) The signage, hereby approved, shall not be illuminated outside of the trading hours of the premises.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal site consists of two major retail stores with other smaller associated outlets. The overall site has an extensive car park with access off a roundabout in Gallions Road. The appeal relates to two totem signs within the north east
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- and south east corners of the site, on the periphery of the car parking area. Each sign is 10 metres in height and 3 metres wide.
5. The Council have drawn attention to Policy 7.4 of the London Plan (LP) and Policies DH1 and DH(f) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan: Core Strategy with Detailed Policies 2014 (CS). I have taken these 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 material factors. The Council raise no issue in respect of public safety and I have no reason to disagree. Therefore, the main issue is the effect of the advertisements on amenity.
 6. As the Council identify this is an 'established commercial area' with a shopping Park behind the Sainsbury's store to the west and large-scale commercial buildings and expansive car parking areas to the east and north. It is adjoined by major, heavily trafficked roads, with the 5/6 lane Buggys Way to the north and Woolwich Road to the south. While development to the south of Woolwich Road appears predominantly residential there is a petrol filling station opposite the car park to the site with associated advertising including, as highlighted by the appellant, a lower totem advertisement sign.
 7. I accept that the overall advertisement display provided by each totem sign, due to the area of the signage involved, is relatively substantial. However, although located at the corners of the site, each totem is set back from the edge of the highway, alongside wide pavements, with a back drop of large commercial/retail units. As put forward by the appellant, they provide some identification at important points of entry to the site. In my view, the signs do not appear unduly prominent or visually dominant, as sited, and do not appear out of place in the context of the site or wider setting. The totems represent stand-alone features which are sufficiently distant from other signage so as not to compete with it or result in advertisement clutter.
 8. I have noted that advertisement consent has previously been granted for signs of a similar height and position to those in this appeal, but to a different design. However, I have considered this display on its individual merits based on the specific details submitted.
 9. I conclude that the display of two free standing totem signs, as put forward, is not detrimental to the interests of amenity, or materially harmful to the overall character and appearance of the area, and that consent should be granted.

Conditions

10. In addition to the standard conditions the Council added two conditions to the advertisements they granted consent under the split decision, one at the request of Transport for London. To be consistent, I consider it reasonable to impose these additional conditions on this consent subject to minor amendment for clarity.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Ray Wright

INSPECTOR