

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 1 November 2016

by C L Humphrey BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 11th November 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/Z/16/3154877

McDonald's Restaurant, Ruston Road, Woolwich SE18 5NS

- 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 McDonald's Restaurant Ltd against the decision of Royal Borough of Greenwich Council.
 - The application Ref 16/0990/A, dated 31 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 1 June 2016.
 - The advertisement proposed is installation of a freestanding drive totem 8m sign.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the appeal proposal on amenity.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is occupied by a single storey McDonald's Restaurant located adjacent to the roundabout at the junction of Ruston Road and Woolwich Church Street.
4. The appeal proposal would replace an existing totem sign positioned near the boundary at the south-west corner of the site with a taller totem sign of a different design in the same location.
5. There is a mixture of commercial and residential uses in the surrounding area. Street furniture and advertising are not uncommon features of the street scene, although there are no signs in the immediate vicinity of a comparable scale and design to that proposed.
6. In accordance with the Regulations¹, I have taken into account the provisions of the development plan so far as they are material. Policy DH(f) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan: Core Strategy with Detailed Policies (LPCSDP) states, among other things, that advertisements should harmonise with the scale and character of the surrounding area. This is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework, which sets out at paragraph 67 that poorly placed advertisements can have a negative impact on the appearance of the built and natural environment.

¹ Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

7. It is proposed that the width of the replacement totem sign would be about 0.5m narrower and around 1.5m higher than the existing totem sign. The appeal proposal would feature 3 separate panels fixed near the top of the pole. Therefore, although it would be narrower, it would have a far more solid form than the existing totem sign which has a lightweight appearance created by the open arch at the top of the pole.
8. By reason of its height and bulk at a high level the proposed totem sign would be extremely prominent, appearing as a stark and incongruous addition to the street scene. As such, the appeal proposal would have a harmful effect on amenity.
9. I note that the individual logos rather than the whole panels would be illuminated, and that this would represent a reduction in the overall size of the illuminated area compared to the existing totem sign. However, this would not overcome the harm I have identified.
10. The existing totem sign is visible at the roundabout and from roads approaching the junction and the business has a noticeable presence within the street scene. I therefore give little weight to the argument that the appeal proposal is required because of lack of visibility.
11. The appellant makes reference to recent consents for totem signs and advertisement hoardings in the wider area. I have not been provided with full details of these schemes and therefore cannot make comparisons with the appeal proposal. In any event, I am required to reach conclusions based on the individual circumstances of this appeal.
12. I have taken into account Policies DH1 and DH(f) of the LPCSDP and Policy 7.4 of the London Plan which seek to protect amenity and so are material in this case. I have concluded that the proposal would harm amenity, and therefore the appeal proposal conflicts with these policies.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, and having had regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

C L Humphrey

INSPECTOR