
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 November 2016

by W Fabian BA Hons Dip Arch RIBA IHBC

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

Decision date: 06 December 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/Z4310/Z/16/3155589

Land West of Low Hill, Liverpool, L6 1NA

- 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 London and Cambridge Properties Limited against the decision of Liverpool City Council.
 - The application Ref 16A/0806, dated 17 March 2016, was refused by notice dated 9 June 2016.
 - The advertisement proposed is a 48 sheet hoarding.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The application that resulted in this appeal was submitted at the same time by the same appellant as two other similar but different applications nearby at different locations at the same roundabout, described below. Separate appeals have been made in respect of those applications and I have considered these also, taking into account the different circumstances in each case. This appeal decision relates only to the application described above and has been determined on its own merits.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on visual amenity.

Reasons

4. The proposed non-illuminated timber-framed plywood advertisement hoarding would be erected at the northeast end of a large triangular traffic roundabout (gyratory) on the A580, a main dual carriageway approach to Liverpool city centre. The roundabout incorporates the Erskine Industrial Estate, a small complex of business units. These are low plain buildings clad with dark profiled steel sheets that also curve over the eaves to form the roofs. The ground level of the industrial estate is set a little below the surrounding roads and there are areas of tree and shrub planting within the wide surrounding roadside grass verge that soften its overall appearance.
5. Policy OE15 of the Liverpool Unitary Development Plan, November 2002, (UDP) sets out the Council's aim to enhance the appearance of designated Environment Improvement Corridors by requiring the retention of existing

landscape features. It states that advertisement consent will be refused for signs and other advertisements which by reason of their size and situation detract from the visual amenity of the corridor. The appeal site lies within the North East Corridor, which includes the A580.

6. Alongside the appeal site the buildings are around 2m below the grass verge, with a steep bank down. The proposed hoarding would be some 6.4m long by 4.6m high overall and would occupy almost the full width of the grass verge, projecting above the steep bank. The elevation drawing provided does not show the relationship of the proposed hoarding to the building. From my site visit, given the relative ground levels here it would be almost as high overall as the roof of this particular unit, which is stepped a little down from the general building height here. Seen projecting out alongside the gable end of the unit, it would thus appear to higher than its eaves. It would not be seen against a backdrop of buildings at this point, as suggested by the appellant; rather, it would interrupt the currently open landscaped verge and project out from the building line in an ungainly relationship to it. It would introduce visual clutter that would detract from the existing landscaping around the industrial estate, contrary to the aims of the Council's Environment Improvement Corridor policy.
7. The proposed hoarding would be seen in the context here of a few existing authorised advertisement hoardings, but these are generally not within landscaped areas such as this one. The illuminated static hoarding determined by appeal close-by on Low Hill was allowed for a temporary period of 30 months only in October 2014 and I note that that time has now expired. Moreover, it was set against a high boundary wall, wholly unlike the appeal site.
8. At the bend between Brunswick Road and Low Hill on the roundabout there are sizeable roadside areas of shrub planting followed by a widely spaced group of some four or so semi-mature trees. The positions and proximity of these trees to the proposed hoarding is not identified on the small scale plan submitted. From the site visit, however, it is apparent that the proposed hoarding would be erected just beyond this group of trees, at right angles to the west side of the carriageway, a little before the end of one of the units facing towards the one-way south-bound traffic on Low Hill; although the trees are currently leafless, during summer months the canopies would obscure views of the hoarding from oncoming traffic to a significant degree, such that significant pressure for substantial pruning or even felling of some of the trees would be likely. In the absence of any persuasive evidence to the contrary on this matter I am not satisfied that the aim of UDP policy OE15 to retain existing landscape features would be met.
9. Taking all these matters into account, I conclude that the proposal would harm the visual amenity of the surrounding area and the appeal should be dismissed.

Wenda Fabian

Inspector