

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 February 2017

by R Barrett BSc (Hons) MSc Dip UD Dip Hist Cons MRTPI IHBC

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

Decision date: 6th March 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/X5990/Z/16/3166921

Basement and Ground Floor, 103 Queensway, London W2 4SJ

- 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 Mr Mark Wilmer against the decision of City of Westminster Council.
 - The application Ref 16/09022/ADV, dated 5 September 2016, was refused by notice dated 10 November 2016.
 - The advertisement proposed is display of internally illuminated panel sign (sign 7c) above Moscow Road entrance measuring 1.25m X 1.00m; illuminated menu box (sign 9c) measuring 0.76m X 0.42m and internally illuminated hanging sign (sign 15b) measuring 0.70m X 0.70m.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. I have used the Council's description of proposed works above as it more accurately describes the advertisements sought.

Main Issue

3. Whether the proposed advertisements would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Queensway Conservation Area (QCA) and the locality.

Reasons

4. The appeal site includes a building which includes a Pizza Hut on its ground floor. It is prominently sited at the junction of Queensway and Moscow Road. It is located within the QCA. The QCA includes mansion blocks and generally uniform terraces of different ages and styles, which together, provide a sense of cohesion. The ground floors of properties on Queensway mainly consist of a variety of commercial frontages and some original shop fronts. The appeal site, its ornate detailing and decorated window and door openings contribute to that character and appearance, whether contemporary with the main building or not. This assessment accords with the QCA Audit (2008), in which the appeal building is noted as an unlisted building of merit and the ornate plasterwork and Classical detailing is itemised as an important remnant of Queensway's former appearance. It also notes, in paragraph 5.10 that inappropriately designed shopfronts, signs and their illumination result in visual clutter and detract from the character of the area
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5. The proposed advertisements would be sited on the part of the appeal building fronting onto Moscow Road, which is a secondary road to Queensway. They would, together, increase the number of signs on the appeal building, which would result in a variety of signs of different sizes and designs at different heights. Together with signs that have already received advertisement consent¹, they would result in a cluttered appearance. This would detract from the ornate plasterwork and Classical detailing of the appeal building and its contribution to the character and appearance of the QCA.
6. I am aware that proposed sign 7c is intended to direct customers to the new entrance and would be set within the bay recess, that proposed sign 9 would be small and set near to the proposed entrance, and that a sign similar to proposed sign 15b has been approved on the Queensway frontage. None of these matters outweigh my concern. When granting the advertisement consent referred to above², the Council took into account the impact of existing signs on the appeal building, which was a material consideration that weighed heavily in its decision.
7. I am aware that the proposed signs could be removed at a later date and that some signage is necessary to advertise a commercial use. However, consent has been granted for some signage and in this case the amenity issues outweigh the benefits. For this reason it would not fall within the wide definition of sustainable development as set out throughout the National Planning Policy Framework, referred to by the appellant.
8. I conclude that the appeal advertisements would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Queensway Conservation Area and the locality generally. They would fail to accord with Policies S25 and S28 of Westminster's City Plan: Strategic Policies (2013) and Policies DES1, DES8, DES9 of the City of Westminster Unitary Development Plan (2007). Those policies, together, aim to recognise Westminster's historic environment and incorporate exemplary standards of sustainable and inclusive urban design and architecture in development. They also seek advertisements that are well designed and sensitively located within the street scene and relate to the character, scale and architectural features of the building on which they are fixed. Whilst I have identified that there would be conflict with the above Development Plan policies, that matter is material rather than decisive to my decision. However, it serves to reinforce the findings that I have reached above.

Conclusion

9. For the above reasons, and taking all other matters raised into consideration, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

R. Barrett

INSPECTOR

¹ 16/08482/ADV

² 16/08482/ADV