

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 May 2017

by G Powys Jones MSc FRTPI

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

Decision date: 17 May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/Z0116/Z/17/3171580

Land at Newbridge Road, Bristol, BS4 4DH

- 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 Insite Poster Properties Ltd against Bristol City Council.
 - The application Ref 16/06176/A, dated 1 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 19 January 2017.
 - The advertisement is the replacement of externally illuminated 48-sheet advertising display with 48-sheet digital display.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary matter

2. The Framework's guidance on advertisement control underlines the fact that the powers under the Regulations to control advertisements may be exercised only in the interests of amenity and public safety. In this context, the development plan policies referred to have been treated as material considerations. The Council has not raised issues relating to public safety and its objection is based on visual amenity.

Main issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the advertisement on the visual amenity of its surroundings.

Reasons

4. The site lies alongside the busy Newbridge Road at its junction with Mardon Road. An externally illuminated hoarding occupies the site, facing Newbridge Road's westbound traffic. The extant hoarding would be removed and replaced by another of the same size, but which would exhibit what is described as a digital display.
 5. Whilst a café and small parking area are situated in close proximity, the site is located at the interface between a predominantly residential area to the east, southwards of Newbridge Road, and an industrial estate to the west.
 6. Effective visual separation is provided between these disparate areas by the belt of mature trees growing alongside Mardon Road's western frontage. The site is located on the margins of a larger area designated for development plan purposes as a Principal Industrial and Warehousing Area. However, in view of
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the effectiveness of the tree screen, the site is perceived as having more of a visual affinity with the predominantly residential area.

7. The application is described as a replacement, and I note the account of the planning history of the site provided by the appellant to the effect that advertisements '*of this ilk*' have occupied the site since '*at least 2000*'. The appellant considers that substantial weight should be attributed to the history and the extant display. However, Regulation 3 (3) of the 2007 Regulations provides that '*in taking account of factors relevant to amenity, the local planning authority may, if it thinks fit, disregard any advertisement that is being displayed.*'
8. To my mind, the proposed advertisement would stand out prominently and harmfully against a belt of trees which themselves provide a welcome level of visual amenity in an otherwise densely developed environment. Moreover, when approached from the east, the advertisement would be seen in the same visual context as a larger hoarding sited a short distance away, alongside Whitby Road. The two large advertisements would be viewed as merging into one another when approached along Newbridge Road from the east. I therefore share the Council's view that the proposed advertisement, if permitted, would contribute to a visually displeasing prominent clutter of large advertisements.
9. That the advertisement would be close to the Avon Valley Conservation Area, whose boundary runs on the other side of Newbridge Road, also counts against the proposal on amenity grounds.
10. I have considered all other matters raised, including the views of a local resident and the Bristol Civic Society and the references to the *National Planning Policy Framework*, but none outweigh the considerations that led me to conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

G Powys Jones

INSPECTOR