

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 May 2017

by Gary Deane BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 9 June 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/N5660/Z/17/3172876

4 The Pavement, London SW4 0HY

- 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 Ken Jones of Iceland Foods Limited against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lambeth.
 - The application Ref 16/06991/ADV was refused by notice dated 10 February 2017.
 - The advertisement proposed is 2 sets of fascia lettering, fascia background and projecting sign.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural matters

2. The appeal advertisements are in place and appear to be broadly in accordance with the details shown on the plans.
3. I have dealt with another appeal¹ on this site. That appeal is the subject of a separate decision.

Main issue

4. The Council raises no issue in relation to public safety. From the submitted evidence, I have no reason to disagree with that finding. Consequently, the main issue is the effect of the advertisements on amenity.

Reasons

5. The appeal property is a retail unit that occupies a prominent position in a District Centre, within which there is a wide variety of shop fronts and advertisements. The site is also located within the Clapham Conservation Area (CA). That part of the CA to which the site belongs includes retail, residential, cafes and restaurants, all of which contribute to vibrant local street scene. I have paid special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA.
6. The new fascia and projecting signs are both placed above the fascia that previously occupied part of the shop front of the appeal premises. The Council has objected to this arrangement, stating that it has disrupted the original design of No 4 and that of the adjacent units to one side. However, the appellant has provided a photograph to show that the blank wall above the

¹ Appeal Ref APP/N5660/Z/17/3171855

shop front has historically been used, in part, for advertising, albeit some time ago. From what I saw, several other units along the same side of The Pavement close to the site also include deep fascias and projecting signs in a similar position on the host building to that of the advertisements before me. In those particular circumstances, I see no reason, in principle, why the space above the shop front of No 4 to which the new fascia and projecting signs relate, should not be used for advertising.

7. To one side of the new fascia is the word 'Iceland' in large white acrylic letters that stand proud against a red and grey background. The size of these letters clearly needs to be sufficient to identify the name of the retail store and to attract the attention of passers by. However, the lettering appears overly large and it unduly dominates the front elevation of No 4. As it relates poorly to the proportions and appearance of the shop front below, this element of the new fascia sign is an awkward feature of the host building. It sharply contrasts with the fascias of other units close to the site which generally include lettering is proportionate to the sign and the host building, including those to which the appellant has referred and provided photographs. That the word 'Iceland' is illuminated would accentuate its harmful visual impact especially after dark.
8. This part of the appeal scheme is visible from some distance along The Pavement, in both directions. In these views, the word 'Iceland' appears overly prominent and is a visually distracting feature, even with other advertisements at street level and on the premises on either side of No 4. Consequently, it materially harms the amenity of the area and fails to preserve or enhance the character of the CA, to which I attach considerable importance and weight.
9. At the other side of the new fascia, away from the main entrance, are the words 'Clapham Common' in white letters that appear modest in size and are not illuminated. This lettering sits comfortably with the dimensions of the fascia. It complements the modern style of the shop front below with only a subtle effect on the appearance of the host building. This component of the appeal scheme does not look out of place among the varied shop fronts and signage along The Pavement and elsewhere in the CA. It is, therefore, in keeping with the established commercial character and appearance of the CA, which are preserved. It does not materially harm the amenity of the area.
10. Although the size of the new projecting sign exceeds the maximum dimensions outlined in Policy Q17 of the Lambeth Local Plan, it is proportionate to the shop front of No 4. The high level position and outward projection of the sign do not cause it to appear dominant or incongruous in the local street scene. This type of signage is a common feature within the CA and I note that a projecting sign was previously displayed in a similar position on the host building. As such, I find that the projecting sign is not an uncharacteristic addition nor does it harm the amenity of the area or the character and appearance of the CA.
11. Notwithstanding my favourable findings on elements of the new fascia and the projecting sign, the drawings indicate that the advertisements sought are not clearly severable. Consequently, I am unable to issue a split decision that grants consent solely for those parts of the appeal scheme that are acceptable.
12. The proposal is therefore contrary to paragraph 132 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), which directs that great weight should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets. The harm caused to the significance of the CA as a heritage asset is less than substantial. However, the public benefits of the advertisements, primarily through the

support given to the business and the local economy, do not outweigh the harm that I have identified.

13. Reference is made to several planning policies, to which I have had regard as relevant considerations. Powers under the Regulations to control advertisements may only be exercised in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of any material factors. In my determination of the appeal, the policies cited have not therefore by themselves been decisive. I also note that others raised no objections.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Gary Deane

INSPECTOR