
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 May 2017

by S Jones MA(Oxon) DipLP

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

Decision date: 20 June 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/N5660/Z/17/3169296

Food kiosk, 30 The Queens Walk, London SE1 7ND

- 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 Ms Danielle St Pierre on behalf of Wasabi Co Ltd against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lambeth.
 - The application Ref 16/06242/ADV dated 1 November 2016 was refused by notice dated 23 December 2016.
 - The advertisement proposed is display of 1 internally illuminated fascia sign to the side elevation.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the impact of the proposed illuminated advertisement on visual amenity, with special regard to the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. Powers to regulate advertisements may be exercised only in the interests of amenity and public safety. Public safety is not a matter raised in this case.
 4. The sign is already in place and is attached to the end of a food kiosk that is pleasantly situated under some trees opposite the London Eye Ticket kiosk, which is similar to this one. The London Eye is roughly a few metres away as is the side of Grade II* Listed County Hall, which is a 1920s substantial building formerly the headquarters of the Greater London Council, and one of the few buildings to survive the wartime bombing.
 5. The kiosk is also in the South Bank Conservation Area (CA) adjacent to the County Hall building. These heritage features must be given special attention and consideration must be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA.
 6. The CA is represented by the post war redevelopment created by the Festival of Britain buildings, which created its embankment, river walk, and the Queen Elizabeth Hall complex and National Theatre. This collection of buildings has since been recognised as being of national importance along one of the main thoroughfares of the capital along the Thames riverside. Queens Walk is part of that South Bank redevelopment, and is part of the public open space Thames
-

riverside walk, and is referred to as a public space of national importance in the CA Statement 2007 at 2.4.1.

7. I understand that this is an improved design submission, and that the size of the advert has been reduced. I appreciate the need to retain commercial appeal and brand identity in a competitive tourist area, particularly where the area remains well used at night and where there are other competing adverts already. I acknowledge that the appellant considers the sign is part of making the venture commercially viable. However, the need or not for a sign plays no part in determining the effect of a sign on the amenity of an area. I note the Heritage Appeal Statement and the detailed Statement of Case submitted in support of the appeal.
8. However, I conclude from the photographs submitted and from my site visit that although it could not be described as a quiet area overall, it is not heavily characterised by adverts and signs in this particular location by the west side of County Hall. Moreover, the low level flat lettering on the counterpart kiosk opposite has a much more subtle appearance compared to the bold green of the appeal sign. In my view, the style of advert, its features and the illumination, even though the luminance level is relatively low, appears unduly prominent and visually intrusive in this location. Consequently I conclude it harms the visual amenity of the area and therefore fails to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the CA.
9. I note the other advertisements in the area to which my attention has been drawn, particularly Pizza Express which is a reasonable distance away and is behind the Royal Festival Hall and not directly even within or noticeable from the riverside walk area at all. Its relationship to its surroundings is quite different, and I conclude that no direct comparison can be drawn between the signs and locations. Since the Wasabi sign is already installed, I do not have the opportunity to view the previous signs. The café advert in the 2007 CA Statement does not appear to be the same as the Café Zen sign (it says Café Ma.... further wording hidden) so far as I am able to tell. Nevertheless, what now has gone can have only very limited significance in my considerations.
10. Although the appellant has quoted 2015 London Plan Policies 7.4 and 7.5, I conclude that these do not support the appeal because I find that is harmful to visual amenity and it detracts from the local character of the area and the heritage assets. In addition, insofar as they are material considerations in my determination of this matter, I also find that the advert conflicts with the 2015 Lambeth Local Plan (LP) Policies Q5, Q6, Q17, Q20, Q22, PN1 and the South Bank Conservation Area Statement 2007 and the Advertisement and Signage Supplementary Planning Document.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons given above, and having regard to all other matters, I conclude that the display of the advertisement would be detrimental to the interests of amenity, and the appeal is dismissed.

S Jones

INSPECTOR