
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 June 2017

by H Porter BA(Hons) PGDip IHBC

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

Decision date: 20 June 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/C1625/Z/17/3171522

Sainsburys, Dudbridge Road, Stroud GL5 3HG

- 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 Sainsbury's Supermarkets Limited against the decision of Stroud District Council.
 - The application Ref 16/2633/ADV, dated 21 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 17 January 2017.
 - The advertisement is a package of 7 new and amended signs at the foodstore and carpark. 1 no. Totem sign, 1 no. Free-standing way finder sign, 1 no. Wall mounted way finder sign, 1 no. Pharmacy way finder sign, 1 no. Wall panel sign, 1 no. Night hatch panel sign. Please see attached schedule of advertisements for full details of all signage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and express consent is granted for the display of 1 no. internally illuminated fascia sign, identified as Sign 'E' on drawing number 121472/A5. The consent is for five years from the date of this decision and is subject to the five standard conditions set out in the Regulations.

Procedural matter

2. The application description of the type of proposed advertisements refers to a package of 7 new and amended signs, though subsequently lists 6. The attached schedule, also referred to in the description, and the appellant's covering letter, also make provision for 1. no. Illuminated fascia sign. Stroud District Council issued a split decision, granting express consent for six of the proposed advertisements, with the exception being for the display of the internally illuminated fascia sign identified as Sign 'E' on drawing number 121472/A5. The appeal therefore relates solely to the Council's decision to refuse to grant express consent for this one advertisement. It was apparent from my site visit that the Sign 'E' was already in place and appeared to comply with the submitted plans. I have considered the appeal on this basis.

Main Issue

3. The Council have not raised any objection in relation to public safety. The main issue is therefore the effect of the advertisement on the visual amenity of the area, with particular regard to the character and appearance of the Industrial Heritage Conservation Area.
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Reasons

4. Situated in the Industrial Heritage Conservation Area (the IHCA), the appeal advertisement is sited on the north elevation of a substantial superstore, fronting the A46. The building itself rounds the corner of a busy roundabout, where the A46 and A419 converge. The fairly considerable width of the A46 provides a physical and visual separation between appeal site and the more inward-facing and industrial complexes on the opposite side of the road. Beyond the host building's unrelenting brick elevation are storage silos and a petrol filling station and forecourt area and the advertisement is read very much within this modern, commercial context.
5. The advertisement has been installed under, and central to, a much larger sign of illuminated orange, individually applied lettering. Because of their proximity, these two signs are viewed together; both of which are sited close to the roundabout interchange, near to large traffic signs, traffic lights, a bus stop and a large poster displaying store opening times. Although of modern materials, the appeal advertisement is modest in size and has been positioned deferentially to the main store signage. From approaches where it is visible, the appeal advertisement is unobtrusive when viewed amongst the variety of street furniture and other signage within its immediate vicinity.
6. The white and green colour palette, whilst conspicuous, does not appear as harmfully incongruous, especially given the white and green of the nearby traffic signs, and the green bus stop. Given the time of day of my site visit, I did not get a sense of the internal illumination. However, the main store branding, the totem sign at the nearby filling station and the traffic lights would all provide a degree of illumination to the extent that the appeal sign, even at luminance levels 350.00 cd/m^2 , would not appear starkly out of place. While not necessarily attractive, the appeal advertisement is functional and utilitarian. Under the site-specific circumstances, it does not, in my judgement, overly dominate or harmfully detract from the surroundings.
7. Overall, I am satisfied that the appeal advertisement does not stand out as incongruous, over-dominant or unduly prominent in relation to the host building or the streetscene. Accordingly, it has not caused any significant harm to the visual amenity of the area and the character and appearance of the IHCA has been preserved. Consequently, there would be no conflict with Policy ES10 of the Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015, which seek to ensure that Stroud District's historic environment is preserved, protected or enhanced. While not specifically relating to advertisements, I also find no conflict with Policy ES12, insofar as it promotes the quality of the public realm, streets or spaces. There is also no conflict with the design or historic environment policies in the National Planning Policy Framework.
8. The potential to control the times of illumination by condition has been suggested by an interested party. However, no non-standard conditions have been proposed by the Council and I consider that none to be necessary.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

H Porter

INSPECTOR