

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 June 2017

by Patrick Whelan BA(Hons) Dip Arch MA MSc ARB RIBA RTPI

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

Decision date: 3 July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/D5120/Z/17/3173489

20 Broadway, Bexleyheath, London DA6 7LN

- 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 Mrs Luisa Janisch, Lidl UK GmbH, against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bexley.
 - The application Ref 16/02840/ADV, dated 21 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 21 March 2017.
 - The advertisements are a totem sign and gable signs.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and express consent is granted for a totem sign. 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 Matters

2. The original planning application proposed a number of advertisements. The Council issued a split decision that granted consent for some of these, but refused permission for the totem sign which had been erected by the time of my site visit. My decision relates solely to the totem sign which was refused permission by the Council, the plans accompanying the application for which form the basis of my consideration.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed totem sign on the visual amenity of the area.

Reasons

4. Located in the town centre, the Broadway contains large buildings set either side of a wide, tree-lined street with broad footways. While the totem is tall and wide, it clearly identifies the appeal site, and its height is in good proportion to the new building to which it acts as a marker. The totem is broad in relation to its height. However, given its set back from the footway on one side and the expanse of the open car park on the other, as well as the substantial length and height of both the new shop and the existing building immediately to the west, it does not appear out of scale with its immediate surroundings.
 5. In views from the west the sign is subsumed within the background of the elevation of the new shop, and in views from the east it is visually absorbed by
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the flank wall of the large, car-park building. The materials and detailing of the totem reflect those of the shop with which it is associated, and which occupies a long section of the street. I understand the Council's concern to maintain elements of human scale in the street scene. However, the totem is divided into sections which are smaller in scale than the overall envelope, which is itself not out of scale with the tall buildings on the Broadway. In this context, its design is not incongruous with the street scene.

6. Given the heights of the buildings which neighbour the totem, its design, the space around it and the breadth of the overall street, the totem is not visually intrusive in the street scene or over dominant in its setting. Accordingly, I am satisfied that the totem does not harm the visual amenity of the area.
7. I have taken into account policy CS02 of the Core Strategy 2012 and saved policies ENV39 and ENV43 of the Unitary Development Plan 2004 which encourage a high standard of design for advertisements and require that they do not detract from the character or appearance of the surrounding area. Given I have concluded that the totem does not harm amenity, there is no conflict with these policies.

Conclusion

8. For the reasons above, the appeal is allowed.

Patrick Whelan

INSPECTOR