

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 July 2017

by Graham M Garnham BA BPhil MRTPI

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

Decision date: 31 July 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/V5570/Z/17/3177252

482-484 Holloway Road, Islington, London, N7 6HT

- 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 B&Q against the decision of London Borough of Islington Council.
 - The application Ref P2017/0433/ADV, dated 16 January 2017, was refused by notice dated 28 April 2017.
 - The advertisement proposed is 1 off main fascia – LED tube halo illumination; 1 off B&Q module – internal LED illumination; 2 off projecting signs – internal LED illumination.
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Decision

1. I dismiss the appeal relating to the B&Q module sign with internal LED illumination.

Procedural Matters

2. The description of the proposal is taken from one of the two application forms I have been provided with. It seems more closely to relate to the proposal as illustrated by the application drawing and as considered by the Council.
 3. The advertisements for which consent is sought appeared to be in place at the time of my site visit. The retrospective nature of the proposal does not affect my consideration of its merits.
 4. The Council's decision notice gives express consent for the fascia and the projecting signs, and so I only need to deal with the sign that has been refused, namely the B&Q module sign.
 5. The Council's decision notice refers to 3 development plan policies and to a supplementary planning document [SPD], as cited in paragraphs 9 & 10 below. The Regulations require that decisions be made only in the interests of amenity and, where applicable, public safety. Therefore the Council's planning policies cannot be decisive. I nevertheless take them into account as a material consideration, in so far as they relate to amenity.
 6. The appellant refers to the economic benefits of the proposal. However, this is not a matter that comes within the remit of the Regulations, and I am unable to give it weight.
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Main Issue

7. I consider that this is the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

8. The B&Q module sign is 1.25 metres square, mounted on the fascia above the entrance doorway. It projects a little above and a significant distance below the line of the fascia, which is 570 mm deep. It is quite deep (i.e. thick, 168 mm). The edges are white, in contrast to the orange front face, which draws attention to its size and depth in relation to the fascia. About half the height of the large white "B&Q" logo projects below the bottom edge of the fascia. There is to be internal LED illumination. I consider that the size, position, colour and logo on this feature make it a discordant and prominent addition to the frontage and the local street scene, detracting significantly from amenity. Other signage I observed locally is typically contained within the fascia or aligned with it.
9. I find that this part of the proposal is in conflict with Policies DM2.1 & DM2.6 in Islington's Local Plan: Development Management Policies (2013), which seek high quality design in general and with respect to advertisements. The module sign is also contrary to the Council's Urban Design Guide SPD (2017), which advises that signage should be of an appropriate size. These provisions are a material consideration that weighs against the proposal.
10. The appeal site is just outside the south east tip of the Mercers Road / Tavistock Terrace Conservation Area. There is a considerable variation in quality of signage in and near the conservation area. The 'offending' part of the proposal is at the far end of the building from it, in part shielded by street trees. Hence I consider that there is no significant harm to the setting of the conservation area, a heritage asset that is protected by Policy CS9 in Islington's Core Strategy (2011).

Conclusions

11. For the reasons given above, I conclude on balance that the B&Q module sign has a materially harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area and is detrimental to the general interests of amenity. This part of the proposal should be dismissed.
12. The fascia and the 2 projecting signs already have express consent and so I do not include them in my decision, which is set out formally above.

G Garnham

INSPECTOR