
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 October 2017

by Philip Willmer BSc Dip Arch RIBA

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

Decision date: 24 October 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/Z/17/3179552

Land adjacent to East Greenwich Fire Station, Ramac Way, Charlton, SE7 7AX.

- 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 Richard Page (Insite Poster Properties Ltd) against the decision of the Council of the Royal Borough of Greenwich.
 - The application Ref 17/1181/A, dated 4 April 2017, was refused by notice dated 6 June 2017.
 - The advertisement proposed is replacement of an existing illuminated 96-sheet display with illuminated 48-sheet digital display.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and express consent is granted for the display of the advertisement as applied for. 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 and the following additional four conditions:-
 1. The advertisement hereby approved shall operate at an illumination level no greater than 300cd/sqm.
 2. The displays shall not change more than once every 10 seconds, the use of message sequencing for the same product is prohibited and the advertisements shall not include features/equipment which would allow interactive messages/advertisements to be displayed.
 3. There shall be no special effects (including noise, smell, smoke, flashing, fading, blending, or scrolling) of any kind during the time that any message is displayed.
 4. The interval between successive displays shall be instantaneous (0.1 seconds or less), the complete screen shall change, there shall be no visual effects (including flashing, fading, blending, swiping, scrolling or other animated transition methods) between successive displays and the display will include a mechanism to freeze the image in the event of a malfunction.

Procedural Matters

2. The Regulations and the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) both make it clear that advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts. Whilst the Council has drawn my attention to the policies it considers relevant to this appeal,

and I have taken them into account as a material consideration, the Council's policies have not, by themselves, been decisive.

Main Issue

3. I consider the main issue to be the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area, and on residential amenity.

Reasons

4. Advertisement consent is sought to display an internally illuminated 48 sheet digital display hoarding sign. The sign, which would be mounted on the boundary wall of the East Greenwich Fire Station to Ramac Way, would measure 6 metres in width, 3 metres in height and would be set 2 metres above ground level.
5. Advertisement consent (Ref: 16/3998/A) was granted in February 2017 to display an internally illuminated 48-sheet backlit display, also 6 metres in width, 3 metres in height and set 2 metres above ground level, situated in the same location as that proposed. However, that sign would display only a single image continuously whereas that proposed would display a range of static images with each image being changed every 10 seconds.
6. The appeal site is located on the corner of the A206 Woolwich Road and Ramac Way. The Woolwich Road is a busy through road. As I saw there is a mix of small commercial and residential properties on the opposite side of the Woolwich Road to the appeal site. In contrast Ramac Way is wholly commercial, being a service road providing access to a number of large retail warehouses.
7. The proposed sign would be read in the context of the overriding commercial/ industrial character of the area. Given this busy urban location and the fact that the residential dwellings are both some distance from and sit obliquely to the proposed sign on the far side of the Woolwich Road, I do not consider that the proposed sign would appear so overly prominent as to result in unnecessary visual clutter so as to cause harm to the amenity of residents or the character and appearance of the surrounding area.
8. Furthermore, the appellant has suggested, in the event I am minded to allow the appeal, that he would accept a number of additional conditions in addition to the five standard conditions to further reduce the potential impact of the advertisement. In my judgement the imposition of the suggested conditions would be necessary to reduce the visual impact of the proposed advertisement, protect the visual amenity of the area and in the interests of highway safety. However, I consider, as suggested by the Council's Transport and Highway team, that the luminance level at any time should not exceed the 300cd/sqm that was originally applied for. I shall therefore impose four special conditions, as so amended, in addition to the standard conditions in the interests of amenity.
9. Taking these into account I therefore conclude that the proposed display would not cause harm to the general interests of amenity.

Conclusions

10. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Philip Willmer
INSPECTOR