
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 29 November 2017

by Roy Merrett BSc(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 08 December 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/D5120/Z/17/3179125

9 Gloucester Parade, Blackfen Road, Sidcup DA15 8PS

- 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 Paul O' Sullivan, Insite Poster Properties, against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Bexley.
 - The application Ref 17/00795/ADV, dated 21 March 2017, was refused by notice dated 30 May 2017.
 - The advertisement proposed is replacement of an existing 48-sheet advertising display with a 48-sheet digital LED advertising display.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the advertisement on the visual amenity of the area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site comprises the gable elevation of a three storey end of terrace property, within a busy commercial local centre. The site is in a very prominent location close to the junction of various roads. The proposed illuminated advertisement would match the height and width of the existing paper advertisement panel that it would replace and would be displayed in the same position.
 4. The commercial setting of the appeal site would be relatively well lit by ambient lighting at night and I acknowledge the potential to control the intensity of illumination of the sign in accordance with good practice guidance. However it was evident from my visit that the existing advertisement panel covers a significant proportion of the upper part of the gable elevation. Therefore, notwithstanding these considerations, I am firmly of the view that the proposed advertisement would appear dominant, disproportionate and incongruous in relation to the host building; the neighbouring public house, in particular the immediately adjacent single storey wing and adjacent smaller shop front related signage.
 5. The use of illumination would serve to amplify and draw attention to the sense of presence of the advertisement and therefore its negative impact on the street scene. Hence the argument that the sign would break up the blank
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gable elevation of the building has limited merit. Accordingly the proposal would result in harm to amenity and the argument that the Council has not sought discontinuance action against the existing advertisement does not justify the harm identified in this case.

6. I have taken into consideration that the proposal would mean that the existing steel posting platform would become redundant and would therefore be removed. Whilst this structure is relatively bulky and functional in appearance, it is largely viewed against the dark brickwork of the gable elevation of the host building, which serves to significantly absorb and mitigate its visual impact. I am not therefore persuaded that the removal of this structure would offset the introduction of illumination.
7. For the above reasons the proposal would conflict with Policy ENV43 of the London Borough of Bexley Unitary Development Plan 2004 which states that the use of land or buildings for advertisements will be opposed where they detract from the character and appearance of the surrounding area. It would also conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework insofar as it seeks to control advertisements in the interests of amenity whilst taking account of cumulative impacts and does not seek to allow large advertisements in commercial areas in every case.

Conclusion

8. For the reasons set out above, the advertisement would result in harm to the visual amenity of the area and, having taken into account all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should not succeed.

Roy Merrett

INSPECTOR