

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 July 2019

by G Powys Jones MSc FRTPI

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

Decision date: 13th August 2019

Appeal Ref: APP/X5990/Z/19/3229469

164-166 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London, SW1V 2RA

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (The Regulations) against a refusal to grant express consent.
 - The appeal is made by Infinity Outdoor Ltd against the City of Westminster Council.
 - The application Ref 19/02554/ADV, dated 4 April 2019, was refused by notice dated 21 May 2019.
 - The proposed advertisement is a temporary externally illuminated shroud advertisement located upon scaffold.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary & procedural matters

2. The appeal site is a corner building due for renovation/redevelopment. As part of those works scaffolding would be erected around the principal elevations of the building. The intention is to cover the scaffold with a shroud showing a 1:1 image of the building behind it. However, a section of the shroud would be utilised for commercial advertising. This would be externally illuminated from above, the intention being that the proposed static illumination would be limited to the hours between dusk and 11.30pm.
3. In its reasons for refusal the Council relies on policies comprised in the Westminster City Plan and its Unitary Development Plan. However, the *National Planning Policy Framework's* guidance on advertisement control underlines the fact that the powers under the current Regulations to control advertisements may be exercised only in the interests of amenity and public safety. In this context, the development plan policies referred to have been treated as material considerations.
4. The Council has not objected on the grounds of public safety, and I have no reason to question its stance in this regard.
5. The appeal site is located within the Vincent Square Conservation Area (CA), and I am therefore required to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing its character or appearance.

Main issue

6. The main issue is the effect of the proposed advertisement on the visual amenity of the surrounding area.
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Reasons

7. The appeal property is prominently located on the corner of a light controlled junction at the intersection of Vauxhall Bridge Road and Rochester Row. It is a four-storey building of an attractive appearance, with its principal elevations on two frontages. The proposed shroud would cover the entirety of the main elevations above ground floor level, and the advertisement panel would sweep around the corner at the junction.
8. The panel, according to the annotated drawings, would be a sizeable advertisement measuring 18m x 8.5m, occupying the most prominent and visible points on the building. It would be approximately two and a half floors deep.
9. The appellant says that the advertisement is to be located in a heavily trafficked, predominantly commercial area where a variety of existing signage is to be expected. The roads are heavily trafficked, but I saw that this was a locality of mixed use with a significant proportion of residential flats. Notable, however, especially in views along Vauxhall Bridge Road, is the relative absence of advertisement material at a comparable, high level.
10. As the appellant suggests, shrouds of this nature can sometimes in certain locations be beneficial in that they obscure the rather utilitarian appearance of scaffolding whilst construction works take place. However, in view of its size, height and prominence, the proposed advertisement inset would dominate and overpower the shroud, reducing its effectiveness and proving harmful to local visual amenity. This harm would be accentuated by the advertisement panel's illumination during those hours of darkness proposed. The proposal would accordingly result in harm to the CA's character and appearance.
11. I have considered all other matter raised in the representations but I conclude for the reasons provided above that the appeal should be dismissed.

G Powys Jones

INSPECTOR