



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 January 2020

by Andrew McGlone BSc MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 5 February 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/X5990/Z/19/3238841
100 New Bond Street, London W1S 1SP

- 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 Cedric Foulon of Mephisto against the decision of City of Westminster Council.
 - The application Ref 19/06307/ADV, dated 12 August 2019, was refused by notice dated 27 September 2019.
 - The advertisement proposed is internally illuminated hanging/blade sign. New sign installed no higher than existing hanging sign.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. I could see from my site visit that the proposal has been erected in accordance with the submitted plans. I have determined the appeal on this basis.

Main Issue

3. As no public safety concerns have been raised, the main issue is the effect that the sign would have on amenity, and thus, the character and appearance of the building, and the surrounding area, having regard to the Mayfair Conservation Area (MCA).

Reasons

4. The appeal site is an unlisted property located within the MCA which is characterised by multi storey buildings of different ages with a range of commercial uses typically at ground floor. The appeal building has a traditional appearance, which, like others in the street, provides interest that is appreciated from short and long-range views. Given the commercial nature of the area, shop fronts and advertisements play an important role in the character and appearance of the MCA. Specifically, on New Bond Street there are fascia adverts, projecting signs and flags at first floor level. There are examples of non-illuminated and illuminated advertisements.
5. The dispute between the main parties focusses on the proposal's internal means of illumination. As a result of this, the proposal's design is that of a box projecting away from the building's façade above the ground floor shop front. While the appellant contends that the illumination leads to a softer light being emitted from the 'M' emblem, this type of illumination is at odds with the

traditional appearance of the appeal building and neighbouring buildings within the street. I recognise that there are examples of internally illuminated projecting signs at a number of nearby premises, but I do not have details of these schemes or information about the circumstances which led to these adverts being present.

6. As the appellant sets out internally illumination can have a negative appearance if it is installed indiscriminately and without due consideration. The placement of the advert is not unacceptable, but a stricter approach is warranted on the method of illumination so that adverts preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the MCA. The appeal scheme is not subtle and refined enough so as to not harm the visual amenity of the area.
7. In refusing permission, the Council cited policies S25 and S28 of Westminster's City Plan and saved Policy DES 8 of the Unitary Development Plan. Jointly they seek development to respect and conserve heritage assets by not normally granting permission for internally illuminated box fascia or projecting signs. I have also had regard to the Council's Advertisement Design Guidelines and Shopfronts, Blinds and Signs - A Guide to their Design. They are all material in the consideration of this case. Paragraph 132 of the National Planning Policy Framework also explains that the quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed.
8. I consider that the proposal is not acceptable insofar as the visual amenity of the surrounding area, having regard to the MCA due to the means of illumination used. Hence, the proposal would conflict with the policies and guidance set out above.

Conclusion

9. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the appeal is dismissed.

Andrew McGlone

INSPECTOR