



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 February 2020

by Diane Cragg DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 February 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/N4205/Z/19/3241315

Site Number 001031, 170 Deane Road, Bolton BL3 5DL

- 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 Mohammed Farooq (Monster Displays Ltd) against the decision of Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 06588/19, dated 27 July 2019, was refused by notice dated 27 September 2019.
 - The advertisement proposed is gable mounted 1 x 48 sheet digital advertising display unit.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The Regulations¹ require that decisions are made only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of any material factors. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and the Planning Practice Guidance reiterate this approach. Therefore, while I have taken account of the policies and guidelines that the Council consider to be relevant, these have not been decisive in my determination of this appeal.
3. The evidence before me refers to the previous advertisement displayed at the appeal site. At my site visit I saw that there is currently no advertisement displayed. Whether or not the previous advertisement benefits from deemed consent is not a matter for me to determine in the context of an appeal made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007. Accordingly, I have determined the appeal on the basis of the site circumstances at the time of my site visit and the evidence before me.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

5. The appeal site occupies a corner location at the junction of Deane Road and Cannon Street North. The building is a red brick terraced two storey property which forms the end unit in a parade of shops facing Deane Road. The appeal building has a ground floor shop front which extends on to the side elevation

¹ Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisement) (England) Regulations 2007

facing towards Cannon Street North. Although at its junction with Deane Road there is commercial development, Cannon Street North comprises mainly residential terraced properties.

6. Deane Road is characterised by a mix of uses including community and commercial development. There are a variety of building types within the street and the signage along it is mostly commensurate with the variety of uses and the design of buildings. There are a number of examples along Deane Road where signage is displayed on the gable ends of buildings.
7. The gable end of the appeal property occupies a prominent location due to the scale and location of the adjacent commercial premises, which is a single storey structure set back from the Deane Road frontage. The proposed signage would not be visible when travelling west along Deane Road but would be a prominent feature when travelling east.
8. Although I have been provided with a photograph of the previous sign displayed at the appeal site this signage has been removed. At my site visit I saw that the signage on the parade frontage is generally restrained and at ground floor shop fascia level. The proposed 48 sheet digital advertising unit would be in an elevated position at first floor level. Its location would give it a strong presence in the street scene and its size and siting would appear out of scale with the modest gable elevation of the building.
9. The scale and prominent location of the proposed advertisement would be accentuated by the proposed advertisement's illumination and the display of sequential images. I have considered the location of street lighting along Deane Road and accept its presence in the evening and hours of darkness would be lessened by these. However, the streetlights along Cannon Street North are lower and more restrained so that in views towards the site from the residential area to the north the signage would appear particularly prominent after dark. Consequently, I consider that the proposed sign would be a dominant and discordant element in the street scene that would detract from the visual amenity of the area.
10. For these reasons, I find that the appeal advertisement is harmful to the amenity of the area. My attention has been drawn to the relevant policies in the development plan, including Policies CG3 of Bolton's Core Strategy Development Plan Document adopted March 2011. Policy CG3 requires, among other things, that development should be compatible with the surrounding area in terms of scale, massing and form. I have taken this relevant policy into account, which is material in this case, and, for the reasons given above, I find the proposed advertisement would conflict with it.
11. The sign is also in conflict with the General Design Principles Supplementary Planning Document adopted March 2014. This requires advertisements to respect the character of their surroundings, not to be obtrusive to passers-by and relate in scale to the surrounding buildings. I also find conflict with the Framework which states that the quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed.
12. My attention has been drawn to a number of other advertisements in the wider area. The full details of these are not before me. Although I have made myself familiar with the general location of these other signs I do not find, based on the limited information before me, that their locations are directly comparable

with the appeal site and do not form a precedent for the appeal advertisement, which in any case must be considered on its own merits.

Other Matters

13. I acknowledge that potential savings in energy and material consumption may arise from the use of digital signage compared to a poster sign. However, as there is no sign currently displayed at the site, I do not attach weight to this matter.
14. The Council do not object to the siting of the advertisement on public safety grounds subject to conditions and I see no reason to disagree.

Conclusion

15. For the reasons given above the appeal is dismissed.

Diane Cragg

INSPECTOR