



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 February 2020

by David Cross BA(Hons) PgDip(Dist) TechIOA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 24 February 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/N5660/Z/19/3241035

656 Streatham High Road, London SW16 3QL

- 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 Clear Channel against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Lambeth.
 - The application Ref 19/02807/ADV, dated 25 July 2019, was refused by notice dated 2 October 2019.
 - The advertisement proposed is to upgrade the existing top 48 sheet advert poster to a modern digital poster. The dimensions of the replacement poster will be similar to the existing, measuring: Height 3 x Width 6 x Depth 0.06 metres. The height from the ground to the base of the advertisement is 4.15 metres.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matter

2. The descriptions of the advertisement provided on the application form and decision notice have been replaced by a fuller version on the appeal form. I consider that subsequent description to be more comprehensive and I have therefore used it within this decision.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

4. The appeal site is located in an extent of Streatham High Road which contains a mixture of uses, including commercial and residential. The appeal site is the upper of two billboards located on or near to the flank wall of a building, and which face onto a garage forecourt used for car sales. Due to this location and arrangement the appeal site and the advertisement below it are prominent features in views of the street scene.
5. I saw that there were a mixture of hoardings and other advertisements in the area which give the street a relatively cluttered character. This included other digital display posters, including one on the opposite side of the forecourt.
6. The lower hoarding is not within the control of the appellants and this would remain in place, with the result that two advertisements of differing design would be located one above the other. Whilst the dimensions and arrangement

of the advertisements would be similar, I consider the difference in design would be readily apparent and that the proposed digital display would contrast uncomfortably with the more traditional non-illuminated billboard located immediately below.

7. Whilst the illumination level of the proposal could be controlled by condition, I consider that the illuminated nature of the sign would be of increased prominence in the streetscape compared to the existing situation, even allowing for the extent of general illumination in the area at night. Despite the existence of other digital display advertisements in the area, the awkward juxtaposition of the proposed digital poster and the extant hoarding below it, as well as the increased intrusion from the illuminated nature of the proposal, would exacerbate the cluttered appearance of the area. As a result, the proposal would harm the amenity of the area.
8. I am mindful that the existing billboard would remain in place should this appeal be dismissed. However, this does not lead me to a different conclusion on the harm to amenity which would result from the appeal proposal.
9. The appellants refer to consent granted by the Council for the digital display hoarding on the opposite side of the garage forecourt. However, the Council has confirmed that this consent was granted on the basis that two hoardings of a similar arrangement to those at the appeal site would be replaced by a single digital display, with subsequent benefits in respect of amenity. The circumstances of that consent are therefore materially different to the appeal before me.
10. The Council has referred to Policy 7.5 of the London Plan 2016 and Policies Q2, Q5, Q6, Q8 and Q17 of the Lambeth Local Plan 2015 in its reason for refusal. Due to the harm identified previously I consider the proposal would conflict with the amenity, design and public realm considerations referred to in those policies. However, the regulations require that decisions are made only in the interests of amenity and public safety, as appropriate to each case. Consequently, although I have taken these policies into account as a material consideration, they have not been a decisive consideration in my determination of this appeal.
11. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the proposal would be unacceptable on amenity grounds. Taking account of all material planning considerations, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

David Cross

INSPECTOR