
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 5 October 2020

by Tim Wood BA(Hons) BTP MRTPI

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

Decision date: 29 October 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/Z/20/3244989

University of West London, Boston Manor Road, London TW8 9GA

- 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 University of West London against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref 00133/AS/AD3, dated 27 August 2019, was refused by notice dated 26 November 2019.
 - The advertisement proposed is the installation of non-illuminated signs on two sides of a support column including LED display matrix.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issues

2. The main issues in this appeal are:
 - The effects of the proposal on visual amenity
 - The effects of the proposal on highway safety.

Reasons

Visual Amenity

3. The proposed advertisement would surround one of the concrete supporting columns of the elevated section of the M4 Motorway. The display would be on 2 sides with a LED display matrix. The proposal would sit on a section of land which is visually separated from the adjacent University building with a road, vehicle and pedestrian routes around it.
4. Although the area is mixed in terms of land use, containing homes, offices and institutional uses, there is a general absence of advertisements at street level here; the one exception is the nearby food shop.
5. The signs would be applied to the concrete column and would sit immediately adjacent to the pavement/pedestrian route here, at ground level. Due to its size and proximity to the pedestrian realm, it would have a considerable visual presence. It would also be clearly visible from the adjacent road. Taking account of the immediate area, I consider that the proposal would appear significantly out of place and would have a detrimental effect on the visual environment.

Highway Safety

6. The advertisement would be sited close to the junction on Boston Manor Road and would be visible to drivers heading south, towards the nearby junction with the A4. Although one side of it would be visible, it would be set to one side of the junction and not directly in a driver's normal line-of-sight. In this way, I consider that it would be as many other road-side signs, whereby it would be visible but not unduly distracting. Therefore, I consider that highway and pedestrian safety would not be prejudiced by the proposal.

Other Matters and Conclusion

7. The appellant makes reference to an alleged need for the proposed sign. However, the Regulations make it clear that such applications will only be determined in the interests of amenity and public safety and there is no indication in the National Planning Policy Framework of the Planning Practice Guidance that other matters can be taken into account.
8. The appellant has also drawn my attention to a permitted advertisement nearby on a University building. As far as it is relevant for me to do so, I can identify clear differences between that advert and the appeal scheme including, its location on a building and its distance and height above the public realm.
9. For the reasons set out I conclude that the proposal would have a harmful effect on visual amenity within the locality. Consequently, the proposal is contrary to Policies CC1 and CC5 of the London Borough of Hounslow Local Plan. Taking these matters together, the appeal is dismissed.

S T Wood

INSPECTOR