



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 December 2020

by P D Sedgwick BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 06 January 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/L5810/Z/20/3257884

Lidl, Richmond Road, Twickenham, TW1 2EF

- 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 Ms I O'Hegarty on behalf of Lidl Great Britain Ltd against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames.
 - The application Ref 20/1354/ADV, dated 19 May 2020, was refused by notice dated 25 June 2020.
 - The advertisement proposed is one high level fascia sign.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is whether the sign preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the Richmond Road (East Twickenham) Conservation Area (CA) and the setting of nearby Listed Buildings and Buildings of Townscape Merit.

Reasons

3. The appeal property is on a shopping street with a range of retail and commercial units. It lies within the Richmond Road (East Twickenham) Conservation Area (CA) and next to the Grade II listed Old Ryde House. It is set behind the line of neighbouring shop frontages and comprises 3 storeys. The upper floors, which will accommodate a school, are mostly set back behind the line of the ground floor shop. This gives the building a stepped profile. However, the end of the building that joins the neighbouring shops includes upper floors that project forward, in line with the ground floor shop's building line. The proposed sign would be located on the side wall of this section of the building.
4. Section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states the need to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings and any features of special architectural or historic interest they possess, and Section 72 (1) requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.
5. The area around the appeal site is characterised by terraces of red brick two storey buildings with shops predominantly on the ground floor. Large, pitched roof dormers project from what appear to be mansard roofs when viewed from

Richmond Road. Shop signs within the area vary in terms of design and size. Most are on fascia boards with some hanging signs mainly at fascia level, which accords with the advice in the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames Supplementary Planning Document Shopfronts (March 2010) (SPD).

6. Although the proposed sign is described as a fascia sign, it would not be placed on the shop fascia. Its position on an upper floor side wall, above the level of the main shop roof, would give it an incongruous appearance poorly related to the shop below. The proposal would conflict with the SPD which advises that signage on the upper floors of buildings should not relate to the commercial use of the building at street level.
7. The height and width of the sign would be substantially larger than any of the shop signs I saw in the vicinity. It would be a similar height to the adjacent school windows that dominate the upper floors of the building. Consequently, it would dominate the side wall and neither preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the building or wider CA.
8. The Officer's Report referred to the potential harm to the setting of the Grade 1 listed Richmond Bridge, Grade II listed Old Ryde House adjacent to the site, and Buildings of Townscape Merit (BTM). Richmond Bridge is sufficiently distant and out of view that neither the bridge nor its setting would be affected by the proposal. Ryde House is set back from the road behind metal railings. The front lawn and mature trees along the boundary railings form its setting. The proposed sign would be on part of the building furthest from Old Ryde House and peripheral to a degree that it would not, in my view, present any harm to the setting or to the building itself.
9. There would be no mutual visibility between the Buildings of Townscape Merit in Beresford Avenue CA which is to the rear of the building, and as such they would be unaffected by the proposal. The proposal would not therefore conflict with Policy LP 4 of the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames Local Plan (July 2018) (LP) which seeks to preserve the significance, character and setting of non-designated heritage assets including Buildings of Townscape Merit.
10. Nevertheless, I have concluded that there would be harm to the appearance of the host building. Given the small scale of the development within the context of the conservation area as a whole, it would not harm its character. There would however be harm in terms of its appearance. The harm would be localised, limited and less than substantial but would nevertheless be contrary to policies LP1, LP3 and LP8 of the London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames Local Plan (July 2018) (LP) which seek to protect visual amenity, ensure that development preserves or enhances conservation areas, and prevent advertisements from harming the appearance of buildings.
11. Any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset requires justification and, in accordance with paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework, I must weigh the harm against the public benefits of the proposal. However no public benefits have been put forward by the appellant.

Other Matters

12. Third party representations raised concerns regarding a lack of engagement with the community, the impact on traffic and the size of signs elsewhere. However, these do not add to my reasons for dismissing the appeal.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

P D Sedgwick

INSPECTOR