
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 30 April 2021

by Euan FS Pearson BA(Hons) BTP FRGS MRICS MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 June 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/L3625/Z/20/3262646

Waitrose, Victoria Road, Horley RH6 7PZ

- 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 Waitrose & Partners against the decision of Reigate and Banstead Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 20/01459/ADV, dated 13 July 2020, was refused by notice dated 25 September 2020.
 - The advertisement proposed is “1 no. internally illuminated totem sign”.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and express consent is granted for the display of 1 no. internally illuminated totem sign as applied for. The consent is for five years from the date of this decision and is subject to the five standard conditions set out in the Regulations.

Procedural Matter

2. The Regulations and the National Planning Framework (the Framework) both make clear that advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts. Whilst the Council has drawn my attention to policies within the Development Plan, considered relevant to this appeal, and I have taken these into account, the Council's policies have not been, by themselves, decisive.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the advertisement on amenity with particular regard to the setting of the adjacent listed building.

Reasons

4. The proposed totem style advertisement sign would be about 4 metres tall and 1.1 metres wide, and would be sited at the entrance to the supermarket car park on Victoria Road. The proposed internally illuminated sign (up to 22 lumens) would feature white lettering on a background of greens. I note from my site visit that there is an existing totem in place, near to the south facing gable of the adjacent Grade II Listed Building: a substantial, brown brick former engine shed, of historic interest as the only original building of the London-Brighton railway, surviving in Surrey. The appeal proposal would utilise the existing totem's structure but would involve the replacement of the outside panels and internal illumination.

5. The appeal property is within Horley town centre where there are a plethora of advertisements relating to commercial activity. These include the various advertisements affixed to and applied to the glazing within the round-headed arches, of the former engine shed. However, it is not clear if these benefit from consent or not. There are also general advertising hoardings on the boundaries of the Council's car park, to the north of the former engine shed.
6. Advertisements are subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety. The Council considers that the sign will not result in harm to public or traffic safety. I see no reason to disagree.
7. Given the alignment of Consort Way East, the western elevation of the former engine shed is the most dominant and features a long length of brickwork wall with central arched entrance and regularly spaced window openings either side. The backdrop of the proposed totem is that of the south facing gable with its two infilled stone arches and its triangular stone pediment at upper floor level.
8. The proposed totem with a narrow width and single-storey height, would not obscure these key features on the substantially wider and taller gable. The proposed colours are not garish, and would not result in the totem, although visible from the public realm, being visually obtrusive. The proposed low-level lighting of lettering would not be unacceptable, considering the arches behind are glazed and capable of emitting backlight themselves.
9. Therefore, I consider that the proposed totem would not, remarkably, detract from the setting of the listed building, thus not causing harm to amenity, visual or otherwise.
10. For the above reasons, the proposed totem sign would not be detrimental to the interests of amenity and would accord with policies DES1 and NHE9 of Reigate & Banstead Local Plan Development Management Plan 2019. These require, amongst other matters, that proposals respect the character of the surrounding area and avoid substantial harm to heritage assets.

Conditions

11. The Council has stated on the appeal questionnaire that it considers that there are no conditions necessary, other than the five standard advertisement conditions, as set out in Schedule 2 of the Regulations. Given the nature of the proposal, I see no reason to disagree.

Conclusion

12. For the reasons set out above, the appeal is allowed.

Euan FS Pearson

INSPECTOR