



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 July 2022

by R Hitchcock BSc(Hons) DipCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20 July 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/Z4310/Z/22/3301551

Land at Derwent Estates, Wavertree Retail Park, Wavertree Road, Liverpool L7 5LZ, (337059, 390109)

- 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 UK Ltd against the decision of Liverpool City Council.
 - The application Ref 22A/0686, dated 8 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 16 May 2022.
 - The advertisement proposed is a single illuminated 48-sheet digital poster display.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The application form and drawing D48-FS-002 showing standard specifications for a LED digital 48 sheet freestanding sign indicate that the base of the advertisement would be some 2.5m above the ground level. This conflicts with a proposed section on drawing T4677 A4 060 which shows a higher position. The latter plan would account for a change in land levels between the proposed location of the sign and the roadside footpath. As a site-specific plan, I have determined the appeal on the basis of drawing no.T4677 A4 060.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect on the visual amenity of the locality.

Reasons

4. The site is located on a prominent corner close to a busy 5-way signalised road junction. It consists of a small planted area set behind a stepped pedestrian entrance into a car park serving a retail park. The junction is bordered by mixed commercial development, community facilities and landscaped spaces. The scale of the intersection, width of the Wavertree Road corridor, and the landscaped areas to the west provide a sense of openness about the junction.
5. The proposal includes the installation of a digital advertising hoarding with its base in the planted area. It would be angled to the junction above a timber clad supporting frame. The display would show static images which would change every 10 seconds.
6. The proposed location of the sign would be close to the back of the pavement where it would be primarily visible to moving highway users travelling east along Wavertree Road and south along Durning Road. Some limited sideways

views by drivers waiting on Tunnel Road and the westbound side of Wavertree Road would also be achievable.

7. Given the close proximity to the junction and wide scope of views, the display would significantly impose on and dominate the area about the junction. On the main approaches from the north and west, it would be seen in conjunction with existing signage high on the side and rear elevations of a retail unit a short distance behind the proposed display. This would result in conflicting alignments between the advertisements creating poor framing and a degree of visual clutter. This effect would be exacerbated by the presence of closely sited street lighting columns and a CCTV mast a short distance in front of the proposed display.
8. Travelling in the opposite direction on Wavertree Road, the combined assembly, consisting of the rear of the display panel and supporting frame, would project into the space about the junction. As the illuminated display would not be visible from this direction, it would appear as an incongruous freestanding blank structure of some size. When sited so close to the junction, the scale and largely featureless utilitarian appearance of the rear elevation would be a detracting feature in those views.
9. Although such hoardings are intended to have a degree of prominence to serve their purpose, I find that, despite the unencumbered mainly commercial setting, the proposal would relate poorly to its context. It would unduly impose on the open character of the interchange and jar with the arrangement of development in the locality.
10. I note that the level of illumination could be managed to correspond to ambient light levels during the day and would not exceed 300cd/sqm during the night-time. It would also be sited in an area of other light sources and could be turned off for a period of the night. However, this does not alter my findings in relation to the effect of the siting and scale of the sign on the local streetscape. The fact that the display would be illuminated and have a degree of animation caused by the changing of images would merely draw focus to my concerns in relation to its effect.
11. For the above reasons, I find that the proposed display would cause significant harm to the visual amenity of the locality. It would conflict with Policies UD1 and UD9 Liverpool Local Plan 2013-2033 [Jan 2022] as they require development to respond to its location without harm to amenity.

Other Matters

12. The lack of objections from consultees or third parties, and the compliance with the requirement to avoid adverse safety or residential amenity impacts set out in the above policies are not benefits in favour of the proposal.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given, I conclude that the appeal should not be allowed.

R Hitchcock

INSPECTOR