



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/22/3301431

15 Parker Street, Liverpool L1 1DJ

- 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 SDI Property Limited against the decision of Liverpool City Council.
 - The application Ref 22A/0685, dated 9 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 4 May 2022.
 - The advertisement proposed is to display 9 flags.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and express consent is granted for the display of 9 flags 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.

Preliminary Matters

2. At the time of my site visit, flag advertisements had been installed on the buildings in a similar manner to those detailed in the submitted drawings. There were some discrepancies between the drawings and the existing works. For the avoidance of doubt, I have considered the proposals as they appear on the appeal drawings and on which parties were consulted.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed advertisements on amenity.

Reasons

4. The site is located at the junction of Parker Street and Houghton Street. The building is a large, impressive corner building of multiple storeys situated within a pedestrianised main city centre shopping area. The lower floors are currently used for commercial retail and the ground floor features large display windows with fascia signage above. Along with branded canopies over 2 main entrances, the signage takes the form of a plain black background with small white lettering displaying the retailer's name.
5. The proposal includes the fixing of 9 projecting flag staffs angled to the street elevations. The 3m poles would taper and fly 9 vertically hanging banner flags displaying the shop name and a single brand logo of goods sold. The flag staffs would be positioned in a constant horizontal line along an upper frieze below the first-floor cornice. The positions would be aligned with the vertical lines of masonry between the ground and upper floor openings. The flags either side of the main corner entrance would have a degree of symmetry.

6. Over the length of the 2 frontages, the projection distance, drop and horizontal spacing ensure that the consecutive flags do not detract from the building's main façades. The positioning and scale of the banners would respond to the building's architecture. They would appear as relatively slender forms of display with good spacing and would not overwhelm the building or its detailing.
7. The flags would be seen in conjunction with the existing fascia signs, canopies and some digital displays within the ground floor windows. Whilst there would be a relatively high number of signs, the muted monochromatic detailing and consistent limited character sizing on the building mounted signage would provide a high degree of consolidation. It would maintain a simple cohesive approach that responds to the dark framing of the openings and the black marble plinths at street level. I find the overall effect would be a high-quality appearance fitting of the building.
8. On the main frontage along Parker Street, the projecting nature of the signs would be somewhat balanced by the canopies extending over the pedestrianised area from the buildings opposite. The projection and movement of the flags would draw the eye, as they are intended to do, whilst adding a degree of dynamic movement to enhance the vibrancy of the frontages.
9. I acknowledge that there are few instances of flag signage on Parker Street. However, I saw that there are examples of flag and banner advertising in the surrounding streets and in Williamson Square nearby. These included both building-mounted and freestanding flags and banners.
10. Although other units in the locality benefit from limited projecting signage, they generally have more limited frontages. As smaller forms of signage, the flags would appear more refined than some heavily bracketed deep projecting signs visible in the locality. In contrast, these occasionally have considerable visual weight and extend across multiple floor levels.
11. I note the Council's concerns in respect of the potential for flags to become entangled or weathered such that they appear untidy. However, it is a requirement of consent that advertisements be maintained in a condition that does not impair the visual amenity of the site. It is therefore within the gift of the Council to require the removal of a display that becomes unsightly.
12. For the above reasons, I find the proposal would contribute to the visual amenity of the area without detracting from the architectural quality and appearance of the building on which they would be mounted. They would integrate with and complement existing signage in a manner to avoid visual clutter. Accordingly, I find that they comply with Policy UD9 Liverpool Local Plan 2013-2033 [Jan 2022] as it requires high standards of advertising without harm to amenity.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons given above, the appeal is allowed.

R Hitchcock

INSPECTOR