



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 July 2022

by R Jones BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 25th July 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/U2370/Z/22/3299523

Land adjacent former Packaged Ice Company Warehouses, Amounderness Way, Fleetwood FY7 6NN

- 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 Vivid Outdoor Media Solutions (A) Limited against the decision of Wyre Council.
 - The application Ref 22/0198/ADV, dated 15 February 2022, was refused by notice dated 6 May 2022.
 - The advertisement proposed is display of two freestanding 48-sheet sized digital LED advertising units.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

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

Reasons

3. The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements)(England) Regulations 2007 (the Regulations) requires that decisions are made only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of any material factors. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and the Planning Practice Guidance (the PPG) confirm this approach. Therefore, while I have taken account of the policies referred to by the Council in its Decision Notice, they have not been decisive in my determination of this appeal.
4. The appeal site is part of the former Packaged Ice Company works and warehouse complex, which fronts Dock Avenue and it set back from Amounderness Way (A585) behind areas of hardstanding that appears originally used for parking and servicing. This part of Amounderness Way is busy as you approach Fleetwood town centre and is the main broadly north, south route along the Flyde peninsula. The proposed digital advertisements would measure around 3m by 6m, mounted on steel support legs around 2.7m from the ground, a total height of around 6.1m allowing for the frame.
5. The proposed advertisements would be sited at either end of the site frontage adjacent to the low boundary palisade fence and angled toward traffic travelling both north and south to/from Fleetwood town centre. In either direction, the screens would be seen against the backdrop of the existing works

- and warehouse buildings and would not particularly break the skyline. However, they would be set well forward of the existing buildings and this, in combination with their size and overall height, means they would appear unduly prominent in a main gateway location approaching Fleetwood.
6. The guidance in the PPG is that large poster-hoardings might be permitted in an industrial or commercial area of a major city (where there are large buildings and main highways) where the advertisement would not adversely affect the visual amenity of the neighbourhood of the site. I recognise that the appeal site is in an area that is predominantly commercial and industrial in character. However, whilst they have no statutory or local listing, the former Packaged Ice Company complex is nonetheless an attractive composition of traditional red brick buildings that make a positive contribution to the street scene. The large size and elevated height of the proposed advertisements, as well as their position right on the frontage, means they would appear a stark and incongruous addition to that composition. This would adversely affect the visual amenity of Amounderness Way and the proposal would not therefore fall within the scope of the PPG guidance.
 7. Located at either end of the 200m frontage of the appeal site the proposed advertisements would be set a reasonable distance apart. However, Amounderness Way at this point is a very straight section of carriageway and the frontage to the site is open, save a low palisade fence. The two large, freestanding advertisements will therefore be viewed together and in quick succession by passing road users. This, in addition to the alternating imagery and text, would serve to exacerbate the harm to amenity that I identify above.
 8. I observed on my site visit that existing signage on Amounderness Way is typically modest in scale, mostly fascia signs associated with the commercial uses. This includes the individual cut lettering detailing on the west elevation of the former Packaged Ice Company warehouse. To the north, is the Affinity outlet shopping centre which has a large poster sign that is mounted on posts so reasonably elevated from the ground. This sign is not, however, illuminated and is offset from Amounderness Way at a right angle and adjacent the outlets large surface car park. Because of the scale, siting and the digital images of the proposed advertisements they would be markedly out of keeping with this existing signage and therein discordant in the visual context of this part of Amounderness Way.
 9. For the above reasons, I conclude that the proposal would have a significantly adverse effect on the amenity of the area. Consequently, it would conflict with Policies CDMP3 and EP14 of the Wyre Local Plan, 2011-2031 (2019) which together require a high standard of design, appropriate to local context that does not harm the character and appearance of the area. It would also conflict with the design and amenity aims of the Framework.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the proposed advertisement would be detrimental to amenity. Therefore, the appeal should be dismissed.

R. Jones

INSPECTOR