



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 July 2022 by A Humphries BSc (Hons) MSc

Decision by Martin Seaton BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 August 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/X5990/Z/22/3300360

First Floor, 164-166 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London, SW1V 2RA

- 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 Mr Giovanni Leuzzo on behalf of Blow Up Media UK Ltd against the decision of City of Westminster Council.
 - The application Ref 22/02589/ADV, dated 13 April 2022, was refused by notice dated 31 May 2022.
 - The advertisement proposed is for a temporary decorative scaffold shroud screen advertisement comprising a 1:1 image of the building façade with an inset area for advertising and information measuring 10.8 metres x 6.6 metres.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Preliminary Matter

3. There is a degree of variation between the description of development on the application form and that provided on the appeal form. I see no reason to deviate from the above description of development, which is taken from the application form and replicated on the Council's decision notice.

Main Issue

4. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) sets out that advertisements should be subject to control with regard to amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts. I note that the Council has not raised any issues regarding public safety and this was not a reason for refusal. On the basis of there being no evidence to the contrary and observations made during the site visit, I see no reason to disagree.
5. The main issue is therefore the effect of the proposed advertisement shroud on amenity, with regard to the host property and the surrounding area and the character and appearance of the Vincent Square Conservation Area and the setting of the Lillington and Longmoore Gardens Conservation Area.

Reasons for the Recommendation

6. With a corner frontage at the junction of Vauxhall Bridge Road and Rochester Row, the host property occupies a prominent position on the street scene and is set within the Vincent Square Conservation Area. Whilst this Conservation Area is principally residential in character, the area around the host property is busier and largely commercial in nature.
7. The significance of the Conservation Area is derived from a varied townscape with an attractive mix of building ages and styles, as noted in the Conservation Area Audit & Management Proposals Vincent Square (2010). The host property is also situated opposite the Lillington and Longmoore Gardens Conservation Area, which is principally residential in character. The Conservation Area Audit Lillington and Longmoore Gardens Conservation Area (2012) indicates that the character of the Lillington and Longmoore estates derives from the complex architectural forms with staggered façades and interlinked communal gardens.
8. The Council has not raised objections to the façade image replica of the host property on the shroud. Based on observations from the site visit and no evidence to the contrary, I would agree that the façade image on the shroud would be acceptable. I also acknowledge that the proposed façade image on the shroud would add visual interest during the temporary period of the building works compared to the alternative of using plain scaffolding. The Council's reason for refusal relates solely to the proposed advertisement, which is therefore the focus of the appeal.
9. Although the proposed advertisement within the temporary shroud is indicated to cover only 17% of the entire wrap to the scaffold, the poster image would cover a large proportion of the first and second floor levels on the façade facing Rochester Row and the corner frontage facing the junction. Owing to its size and position, the proposed advertisement would be a dominant addition to the street scene and be highly visible from vistas along Vauxhall Bridge Road, Warwick Way, Rochester Row and Willow Place.
10. The proposed temporary advertisement would be positioned above the main commercial activity, with commercial premises of the host property and in the locality characterised by small scale fascia and overhanging signs that are principally at ground floor level. Whilst a busy area, large scale advertisements above ground level were not observed during the site visit as a feature of the immediate locality. Given this, and the highly prominent location, the proposed advertisement would be visually intrusive and discordant with the prevailing character of the host property, street scene and the character and appearance of the aforementioned Conservation Areas.
11. The appellant has indicated that the illumination of the proposed advertisement was an optional feature that could either be controlled by a condition or omitted entirely. However, the illumination of the proposed advertisement does not materially alter the harm identified above from the proposed advertisement with regard to visual amenity.
12. I have had regard to the appellant's contention that the proposed advertisement would contribute to the funding of the shroud and the building works, which would include façade restoration. Whilst this may be the case, the building works do not form part of the appeal and no details of the building works have been provided in support of this appeal. Furthermore, no clear

financial details or evidence related to viability linking the proposed advertisement to the funding of the shroud or building works have been provided. This therefore significantly limits the weight that can be attributed in support of the appellant's case.

13. Whilst it is inevitable that the alternative of scaffolding would also detract from the amenity of the area, the use of scaffolding for the temporary period of construction would be an accepted part and expectation of building works. Furthermore, the scaffolding and indeed a plain shroud devoid of advertisement would not appear as visually dominant within the area compared to the proposed advertisement. I appreciate the limited period for which consent is sought, however, this does not mitigate the harm to the visual amenity of the area that would be caused by the proposed advertisement on the shroud, as described above. I have therefore given limited weight to the fallback position of scaffolding.
14. For the reasons above, the proposed shroud advertisement would cause harm to the amenity due to the unacceptable effect on the character and appearance of the host property, the surrounding area and the significance of the Vincent Square Conservation Area and the setting of the Lillington and Longmoore Gardens Conservation Area. The proposed shroud advertisement would therefore neither preserve nor enhance the Conservation Areas. The Council has drawn my attention to Policies 38, 39 and 43 of the City Plan 2019 - 2040 (2021). Collectively, these policies seek high quality design that is sensitive to the local context, positively contributes to the street scene and conserves or enhances heritage assets. Whilst not determinative, I have taken these policies into account in so far as the policy is a material consideration and I found that the proposed advertisement shroud would be contrary to these policies.

Other Matters

15. I have considered the Planning Practice Guidance which states that buildings that have scaffolding around them may be suitable for shroud advertisements. However, this recognises that not all sites will be suitable for such an approach, as would be the case in this instance. In this regard, consideration has also been given to the Framework that recognises poorly sited advertisements can adversely impact the quality and character of places, which has been identified above in relation to the proposed advertisement.

Conclusion and Recommendation

16. For the reasons given above I conclude that the display of the proposed advertisement would be detrimental to the interests of amenity.

A Humphries

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

17. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

Martin Seaton

INSPECTOR