



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 October 2022

by G Ellis BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8th November 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/H5960/Z/22/3301129
36A Plough Road, London SW11 2AS

- 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 Wildstone Estates Limited against the decision of London Borough of Wandsworth.
 - The application Ref: 2022/0871 dated 10 February 2022, was refused by notice dated 26 April 2022.
 - The advertisement proposed is the upgrade of existing 48 sheet advertisement panels to support digital poster.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on amenity.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located at the junction of Plough Road and Holgate Avenue. The building has a commercial use to the ground floor and residential above. The proposal would replace the existing externally illuminated billboard on the flank elevation at first floor level with a digital poster of the same size. It would display static digital imagery, although these are capable of being changed every 10 seconds.
4. The wall mounted display extends from the corner of the building up to the first-floor window, although from what I saw on site the existing display slightly projects in front of the existing window and appears to cover over a second window. The overall scale of the sign appears excessively large, dominating the flank elevation and due to the buildings forward position is prominent in views along Plough Road from the north.
5. The surrounding area is primarily residential and directly opposite the appeal site is the flank of a four-storey apartment block which contains windows to each floor. Other than signage to the retail unit which forms part of the appeal building there are very limited advertisements and visual clutter in the area with the scale of the buildings and trees to Plough Road defining the character of the area. In this context and given the scale and height of the proposed advertisement it would be an obtrusive feature.

6. I acknowledge that the proposal would replace an existing billboard and that the brightness and operational times could be control by conditions. Notwithstanding this, the digital form would accentuate its prominence with the intermittent changing of the illuminated display drawing attention. The format would also contrast with the existing advertisements on the buildings.
7. I appreciate these types of advertisements are found through the UK as shown on the mapping provided by the appellant, but this does not provide any details of size or the specific settings. My attention has also been drawn to a consent in Croydon for a digital display of the same form which also replaced an existing hoarding. Based on the limited information the officers report indicates that proposal would not be out of keeping or result in visual clutter and thereby does not appear to be directly comparable, and I have considered the appeal case on its own merits.
8. Overall, I find that the proposal would be an incongruous feature and visually intrusive to the detriment of the amenity of the area. In accordance with the Regulations, I have taken into account the provisions of the development plan in so far as they are relevant. The proposal would conflict with the aims of policy DMS1 and DMS8 of the Wandsworth Local Plan, Development Management Policies Document, March 2016 (DMPD) and paragraph 136 of the National Planning Policy Framework which seeks to ensure that quality and character of places does not suffer from poorly sited and designed advertisements.

Other Matters

9. The appellant has highlighted various benefits from the use of digital technology compared to traditional billboards including minimising waste, reducing vehicular trips for maintenance, providing opportunities for public/emergency information messaging and increased business rates. The scale of the benefits from this one advertisement would be limited and there is a lack evidence to substantiate the economic suggestions. These matters would not outweigh the harm that I have identified, and the Regulations require that I exercise my powers only with regards to amenity and public safety.

Conclusion

10. I conclude that the display of the advertisement would be detrimental to the interests of amenity. Therefore, for the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

G Ellis

INSPECTOR