



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 26 October 2022

by Sarah Colebourne MA, MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 10th November 2022

Appeal Ref: APP/B4215/Z/22/3304008

117 Stockport Road, Manchester, M12 6AA

- 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 Group Limited against the decision of Manchester City Council.
 - The application Ref 133411/AOH/2022, dated 30 March 2022, was refused by notice dated 6 June 2022.
 - The development proposed is described as 'Upgrade of existing externally illuminated 48 sheet advertisement board to support a digital poster'.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and express consent is granted for the removal of existing 48 sheet advertisement and replacement with 48 sheet illuminated digital display at 117 Stockport Road, Manchester, M12 6AA in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref133411/AOH/2022, dated 30 March 2022. 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 and the following additional conditions:-
 - 1) The sign permitted by this consent shall only be illuminated between the hours of 05.00 and 00.00.
 - 2) The intensity of the illumination of the 48 sheet illuminated digital display permitted by this consent shall be no greater than 200cd/m² during hours of darkness (sunset until sunrise).

Preliminary matters

2. The Council's decision describes the proposal as 'Removal of existing 48 sheet advertisement and replacement with 48 sheet illuminated digital display'. As this describes the proposal more accurately, I have used this as the basis for my determination of the appeal and in the formal decision above.
3. The Regulations require 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) reiterate this approach. Therefore, while I have referred to some of the policies that the Council considers to be relevant to this appeal, these have not been decisive in my determination of this appeal.

Reasons

4. The main issue in this appeal is, therefore, the effect of the proposed advertisement on amenity. The Advertisement Regulations state that factors relevant to amenity include the general characteristics of the locality. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) says that the quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed and that account should be taken of cumulative impacts.
5. The proposed advertisement would be sited in place of an existing 48 sheet (6m by 4m) advertisement on the side elevation of a large post/sorting office building on a busy main road, Stockport Road, at its junction with Syndall Street, a short cul-de-sac which leads to parking at the rear of the building. It would directly face an area of trees and open space on the opposite side of the junction and the side elevation of the large commercial units beyond that. This side of Stockport Road is dominated by commercial uses at this point whilst on the opposite side of the road there are dwellings which form part of a residential area to the south.
6. In 1988 consent was granted for a 48 sheet non-illuminated hoarding at the site although the Council says that no illumination has ever been allowed. The appellant says that the existing advertisement has been externally illuminated for over 13 years (which is accepted by the Council) and that it benefits from deemed consent.
7. Even if that is the case, the proposed advertisement would introduce changing digital images at a high level in a prominent location which is clearly seen in the approach from the city centre along Stockport Road. It would also be seen from some of the dwellings on the opposite side of the road and on Cavanagh Close but rather than the direct views referred to by the Council, those would be oblique views and would be separated from the site by the road. The appellant's submitted lighting diagram indicates that the extent of light spill at 200cd/m² would be directed towards the junction of the two roads and part of the open space area and would fall short of any residential windows, meeting the Institution of Lighting Professional's guidance for pre and post curfew levels of light at residential windows in proximity of the site. Furthermore, the appellant has suggested conditions requiring the sign to be turned off between the hours of 00.00 and 05.00 and limiting the level of illumination during the remaining hours of darkness to 200cd/m². Those conditions are necessary, in addition to the five standard conditions in the Advertisement Regulations, given the proximity of the dwellings referred to above, to mitigate satisfactorily the impact of the internal illumination and changing images on those residents.
8. Given the commercial nature of this side of the road and the presence of several other advertisements on the front of the building and at the adjacent fast-food restaurant including a tall freestanding sign, some of which are also illuminated and have consent, together with advertising at the nearby bus stop and telephone kiosks and tall street lighting columns along both sides of the road, the additional illumination would not be uncharacteristic of the area and would not result in an adverse visual impact, subject to the conditions referred to above. Neither would it lead to an unacceptable number of advertisements in the area or cumulative harm.
9. I conclude then that the proposed advertisement would be acceptable in regard to amenity. The proposal would therefore accord with the Framework and with

development plan policies EN1, SP1 and DM1 of Manchester's LDF Core Strategy DPD (2012) and policies E3.3, DC15.1 and DC15.2 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester which together seek to ensure high quality design on major routes and that advertisements do not intrude into residential neighbourhoods and avoid cumulative effects.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the proposal would not cause harm in terms of amenity and the appeal should be allowed.

Sarah Colebourne

Inspector