



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 August 2023

by L Clark BA(HONS) DIPTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 August 2023

Appeal Ref: APP/N1350/Z/23/3321039

Harrowgate Sports and Social Club, Salters Lane North, Darlington

DL1 3DT

- 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 (B) Limited against the decision of Darlington Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 23/00043/ADV, dated 10 January 2023, was refused by notice dated 2 March 2023.
 - The advertisement proposed is the erection and display of a freestanding 48-sheet advertisement.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed advertisement on the visual amenity of the area with particular regards to its scale, illumination and location.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is a large predominantly two storey detached building set within an extensive plot currently occupied by Harrowgate Sports and Social Club. The building is set back from Salters Lane North by an area of lawn. The general area is a residential suburban location characterised by two storey semi-detached and detached dwellings. Directly opposite the site is an area of open space screened by trees.
4. The openness of the appeal site's frontage, the tree lined boundary of the open space opposite and the surrounding predominantly residential area is generally free from clutter and commercial advertisements. This provides an attractive vista along Salters Lane North.
5. Although the advertisement would not face towards any residential dwellings it would be viewed in the context of the street scene, sitting forward of the host property and above the tall boundary wall. Its size and location would result in a prominent and visually intrusive feature within the street scene, which would be significantly at odds with the established character and appearance of the area. Whilst I noted street lighting in the locality, the illumination of the advertisement would be more obvious given the size of the advertisement, which would contribute to its prominence. Even noting that the level of illumination could be controlled and the presence of streetlighting, I find that

the illumination particularly in the evening and in poor weather would appear as an alien feature in the street scene.

6. Given the above, I conclude that the proposed advertisement would be harmful to the visual amenity of the area. In accordance with the Regulations, I have taken into account the provisions of the development plan so far as they are relevant. Policy DC1 of the Darlington Local Plan 2016-2036 seeks to ensure that development reflects the local environment, with Policy DC4 seeking to ensure that new development is sited, designed and laid out to protect amenity. Given my conclusions there would be conflict with these policies.

Other Matters

7. I note the appellant's claim that the advertisement could be utilised for public information or emergency messages, but have not been presented with substantive evidence regarding how this would be controlled. This matter does not outweigh the identified harm.
8. The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that the quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed. That is the case in this appeal and its urban location does not justify a harmful advertisement.
9. I note the suggestion that advertisements encourage economic growth, but limited evidence has been submitted to quantify such a benefit. In any event such a benefit could be accrued by advertisements located elsewhere where harm to visual amenity would not occur. This does not alter the conclusions I have reached.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, and having had regards to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

L Clark

INSPECTOR