



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 18 August 2023

by Alison Scott (BA Hons) Dip TP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29th November 2023

Appeal A Ref: APP/N5660/Y/23/3317605

Advertisement display at 445 Norwood Road, London SE27 9DJ

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by JC Decaux UK against the decision of London Borough of Lambeth.
 - The application Ref 22/04403/LB, dated 9 December 2022, was refused by notice dated 7 February 2023.
 - The works proposed are removal of existing internally illuminated display followed by the installation of an internally illuminated digital advertisement of similar dimensions.
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Appeal B Ref: APP/N5660/H/23/3317606

Advertisement display at 445 Norwood Road, London SE27 9DJ

- 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 JC Decaux UK against the decision of London Borough of Lambeth.
 - The application Ref 22/04185/ADV, dated 25 November 2022, was refused by notice dated 7 February 2023.
 - The advertisement proposed is removal of existing internally illuminated display followed by the installation of an internally illuminated digital advertisement of similar dimensions.
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Decision

1. **Appeal A:** No action for the reason set out below.
2. **Appeal B:** The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

3. Appeal A relates to an application for listed building consent while Appeal B is for an application for advertisement consent on land at 445 Norwood Road, a Grade II listed building.
4. The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (the Regulations) require decisions to be made only in the interests of amenity and highway safety. Whilst the effect of the advert on public safety is not in dispute between the parties, and I find no reason to contradict this, it is the effect on amenity that is. Factors relevant to amenity are stated by the Regulations to include the general characteristics of the locality, including features of historic or architectural interest.
5. In relation to Appeal A, having regard to section 7(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act), there is nothing before me which confirms that the proposal includes any works for the demolition, alteration or extension of the Grade II listed building known as Norwood Fire

Station. Its boundary wall is however described by the Council as curtilage listed. I have no reason to disagree with this finding. From the evidence before me, there is nothing to suggest that the proposed advertisement would be physically attached to this wall. Consequently, the main parties were given the opportunity to comment on whether the proposal requires listed building consent. The Council responded stating that, in their opinion, listed building consent is not necessary.

6. On the basis of the above, I conclude that the proposal does not include works that require listed building consent and no action is necessary on Appeal A.

Main Issue

7. In the context of the above, the main issue for Appeal B is the effect of the proposed advertisement on visual amenity.

Reasons

8. The Grade II listed West Norwood Fire Station (the former fire station) (List entry number 1392336) is situated on the eastern side of Norwood Road within a busy urban context and is now occupied by a children's day nursery at ground floor with residential dwellings above. It is set back from the road by an open fronted area within which a large single sided landscape-orientated freestanding advertisement is situated and sited perpendicular to it. The extant advertisement was in situ prior to the former fire station being added to the statutory list in 2006. Whilst that advertisement is not physically attached to the listed building, it is within its curtilage and forms part of its immediate setting.
9. Built between 1914-15 by the London County Council (LCC) Architects, the significance of the former fire station stems from its historic associations with the newly formed LCC, and the transformation of fire station architecture by an influential group of architects between 1896 and 1914. The former fire station is one such bespoke station and it is therefore also of significant architectural interest including its form, materials and detailing, which reflect the 'Arts and Crafts' style, particularly within its front façade.
10. The proposed sign would replace the existing advert. Whilst it would be of a similar height and scale, it would not be directly comparable to the proposal before me. More specifically, the current display consists of a single advert printed on vinyl paper and pasted to the backboard, behind glazing, back lit, and manually changed around every two weeks by the operator. Instead, the scheme would introduce a modern digital LED display with static images instantaneously changing at regular intervals using high-definition graphics. By their intentional design, the imagery presented would have the effect of creating a vibrant eye-catching display, seen from a distance.
11. The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced is not fixed and may evolve and change over time. Presently, when viewed from Norwood Road, the existing advertisement forms part of the surroundings that the listed building is experienced within. Due to its proximity to that listed building it has an impact on how the heritage asset is experienced.
12. The proposed sign would be of a similar size, height and location as the existing one. However, the proposal would be materially different to the existing sign due to its illuminated digital screen with changing images. The

changing nature of those images would visually compete with and divert attention from the listed building. This would materially detract from how the heritage asset is experienced. As such, the contribution that setting makes to the significance/special interest of the listed building would be harmed.

13. The character of the local area is a mix of both commercial and residential uses with the busy and main arterial Norwood Road running past the site. There are various illuminated objects that form part of the established street fabric including high level streetlamps, traffic lights, shop signs and large advertisement billboards. However, from my observations of billboard adverts within the locality, those in situ are non-digital.
14. Therefore, a digital display unit in this format would add a new and uncharacteristic advertising dimension to the local area. Together with its prominent position, further emphasised by its proposed location perpendicular to Norwood Road, would not be well assimilated into the amenity of the local area, negatively detracting from it.
15. Additionally, there are residential homes to upper floors of the building with windows at an oblique angle to the proposed advert. Those in closest range to the proposal would experience a different perspective of a new digital and constantly changing advertising feature. The levels of illumination proposed at different times of daylight and night hours would not reduce its negative effect upon their amenity levels.
16. Bringing all matters together, in accordance with the Regulations, I have taken into account the provisions of the development plan so far as they are material. It therefore conflicts with Policies Q5, Q6, Q7 and Q17 of the Lambeth Local Plan 2020-2035 in so far as safeguarding local character and the Council's Advertisement and Signage Guidance 2016, as well as the National Planning Policy Framework that aims to safeguard amenity.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that Appeal B should be dismissed.

Alison Scott

INSPECTOR

