
Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 5 December 2023

by S M Watson BA(Hons) MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 21 December 2023

Appeal A: APP/E5330/Z/22/3294073

Lokanta Bar and Grill, 11-13 Greenwich Church Street, Greenwich, SE10 9BJ

- 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 and Mrs Zinnureyin against the decision of Royal Borough of Greenwich Council.
 - The application Ref 21/4106/A, dated 16 November 2021, was refused by notice dated 9 February 2022.
 - The advertisement proposed is two illuminated LED strip lights to replace 6 swan neck lights above revised fascia signage, 2 illuminated strip lights with replacement projecting signage, and replacement of 5 existing flood lights with 5 LED wall uplights to front facade.
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Appeal B: APP/E5330/X/22/3294105

Lokanta Bar and Grill, 11-13 Greenwich Church Street, Greenwich, SE10 9BJ

- 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 Mr and Mrs Zinnureyin against the decision of Royal Borough of Greenwich Council.
 - The application Ref 21/4462/L, dated 14 December 2021, was refused by notice dated 9 February 2022.
 - The advertisement proposed is two illuminated LED strip lights to replace 6 swan neck lights above revised fascia signage, 2 illuminated strip lights with replacement projecting signage, and replacement of 5 existing flood lights with 5 LED wall uplights to front facade.
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Decisions

1. The appeals are dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. As the proposed works are in a conservation area and are to a listed building, I have taken account of sections 16(2) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) in so far as appeal B is concerned.
3. The Council has submitted their Urban Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (the SPD) which was adopted during the course of the appeal. The appellant has had an opportunity to comment. The SPD supersedes

Supplementary Design Guidance: Shop Signs, Advertisements and Illumination in Greenwich Town Centre (The SPG).

4. A revised National Planning Policy Framework was published on 19 December 2023. There are no revisions to the previous version that have been material to these decisions.
5. The works have been carried out and I am considering the appeals retrospectively.

Main Issues for Both Appeals

6. The main issues are the effect of the illuminated signage and uplighters on the significance of the listed buildings and conservation area.

Reasons

7. The appeal property comprises two Grade II Listed Buildings which are located in the West Greenwich Conservation Area
8. The buildings date from the early to mid-18th century. They were originally built as a house. They have a rendered front elevation and a hipped slated roof partly concealed behind a later entablature and parapet. Each former house has 4 sash windows on the upper floors, the ones at No 11 are replacements in near flush box frames and the windows at No 13 are recessed early 19th century sashes with glazing bars. There is one commercial unit with a single shopfront spanning across the ground floor of both buildings. The upper floors are in residential use.
9. The significance of the buildings are their Georgian domestic architecture, their contribution to the development of Greenwich as an urban centre, their architectural details and composition, and group value as part of the Greenwich townscape.
10. The West Greenwich Conservation Area is significant for its high-quality townscape with a diversity of architectural periods and styles; its position on the Thames waterfront; and its wealth of historic buildings including the Cutty Sark which is Grade I Listed. The area around the appeal site is characterised by mainly three storey classically proportioned buildings within terraces. These terraces form a street-scene with an air of cohesive unity and elegant simplicity.
11. The fascia signage is painted onto the existing timber shopfront and in this respect is appropriate to the buildings. However, the trough lighting above it is attached to the cornice which obscures this architectural feature. Furthermore, because it is attached to the cornice the fitting projects more than it would if it had been attached to the fascia and this gives it an awkward and prominent appearance.
12. I note the appellants' reference to trough lighting on other nearby buildings and I also acknowledge that The Council's SPD suggests that discrete trough lighting maybe acceptable. However, whilst trough lighting may be acceptable in some circumstances, for the above reasons, the trough lighting is not discrete and it therefore conflicts with the SPD. The superseded SPG contained similar advice.

13. The illuminated hanging sign is fixed to a plain, utilitarian bracket which has an industrial appearance lacking in any aesthetic detail. It contrasts and jars with the elegant period building to which it is attached. Furthermore, it is large and situated high up on the building above the fascia. As a result it is unduly dominant on the historic façade, visually detracting from the elegant domestic architecture of the listed buildings and it is obtrusive in the street scene.
14. I give little weight to the fact that there was previously a hanging sign in the same position as the current one because it was not original to the building and it has now gone. The appellant has made comments indicating that a hanging sign on the fascia would be inappropriate. However, even if I were to accept this point, this would not overcome the harm the sign causes in its current position.
15. The 5 LED wall lights which illuminate the upper parts of the façade appear as additional clutter on the building and they are not in keeping with the buildings' elegant proportions and simplicity. The appellant says that the uplights have replaced even less attractive lights which they consider were lawful due to a previous consent. However, I do not have documentation to demonstrate that the previous lights were lawful and therefore I am not persuaded that putting them back would be a realistic fallback position.
16. Due to the inappropriate nature of the design and positioning of the trough lights, the illuminated hanging sign and the 5 LED uplights, the adverts and lighting significantly detract from the composition of the listed buildings and fail to preserve their special interest. As such I find that they also fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area.
17. I find that the harm to the significance of both the listed buildings and the conservation area is less than substantial and, in the language of the Framework, on the lower end of the scale of less than substantial harm for both assets.
18. Paragraph 205 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) advises that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
19. The Framework advises in Paragraph 208 that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
20. The appellants have said that the illuminated signage helps to identify the building at night. This is of some benefit to the economy and to people trying to find the building at night. However, I do not consider that these public benefits outweigh the less than substantial harm to both assets.
21. I note the appellant's comments that the Greenwich Society and the Greenwich Conservation Group have not objected. However, a lack of objection does not equate to a lack of harm.

22. I have conflicting statements in respect of whether the site is within the Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site (WHS) or whether it is in the buffer zone. However, as I am dismissing the appeals, there is no need for me to investigate this matter further.
23. I conclude that the illuminated adverts and uplighting harm the listed buildings and the conservation area. The illuminated adverts thereby harm amenity. Therefore, the lighting and illuminated advertisements are contrary to Policies D3, DH(e), DH(h) and DH(i) of the *Royal Greenwich Local Plan: Core Strategy with Detailed Policies July 2014* and Policy HC1 of the *London Plan*. In combination these policies seek to protect the amenity of the area and preserve heritage assets including listed buildings and conservation areas.

Conclusion

24. For the above reasons, both appeals are dismissed.

Siobhan Watson

INSPECTOR