
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 13 May 2024

by Gary Deane BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 20.05.2024

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/Z/24/3338910

30A Stockwell Street, Greenwich, London SE10 8EY

- 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 Emily Hyder-Smith against the decision of the Council of the Royal Borough of Greenwich.
 - The application Ref 23/3582/A, dated 3 November 2023, was refused by notice dated 27 December 2023.
 - The advertisements are fascia signage on curved fascia, two projecting hanging signs, café banners and umbrellas with branding, menu board.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and express consent is granted for the display of the advertisements as applied for. The consent is for 5 years from the date of this decision and is subject to the 5 standard conditions set out in the Regulations.

Preliminary matters

2. The advertisements to which this appeal relates are in place. These appear to be broadly in accordance with the submitted plans save for the colours of the logo and the words displayed on each projecting sign.
3. The appellant has drawn my attention to a recent appeal decision that involved a similar proposal on the site to the one before me. Given this similarity, the Council was invited make additional representations although none were received. For the avoidance of doubt, I have assessed the proposal before me as it is shown on the plans and on its own merits.
4. Reference is made to various planning policies and guidance, to which I have had regard as relevant considerations. Powers under the Regulations to control advertisements may only be exercised in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of any material factors. In my determination of the appeal, the planning policies and guidance have not therefore by themselves been decisive.

Main issue

5. The Council raises no objection in relation to public safety. From the submitted evidence, I have no reason to disagree with that finding. Accordingly, the main issue is the effect of the proposed advertisements on amenity.

Reasons

6. The appeal property is a ground floor unit within a 3-storey building that occupies a prominent position at the junction of Stockwell Street and Greenwich High Road. It lies within Greenwich Town Centre within which there is a wide range of advertisements often associated with ground floor premises.
7. The site also falls within the West Greenwich Conservation Area (CA) and the buffer zone to the World Heritage Site (WHS). The CA derives its significance as a designated heritage asset from its fine townscape, historic landmark buildings, areas of attractive open space and expansive views from the higher ground towards the City of London. Close to the site, the CA has a mixed character with a variety of shops, restaurants, pubs, offices, hotels and housing all evident. I have paid special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of any buildings or land within the CA.
8. Due to its corner position, the appeal premises has, in effect, two road frontages that are linked by a central curved element that marks the main entrance. On each highway frontage, there would be an aluminium fascia and a double-sided projecting sign. Given this arrangement, the entirety of the fascia and both projecting signs would not be readily evident from any single location. As such, the amount of advertising material, as it is experienced 'on the ground' would not appear excessive, dominant, invasive nor give rise to an impression of visual clutter.
9. The new fascia would include white letters and an orange accent line on a black background. The projecting signs would include a central, coloured image with white letters on a black background. This simple design, together with a textured matt finish to subdue its general appearance, would ensure the advertisements are in keeping with the traditional style of the host building. Each of these advertisements would be externally illuminated by slim trough lights that would be discrete features of the building despite their outward projection above the signs. Consequently, the method of illumination would have a limited effect on the building's appearance and the local street scenes.
10. On the Stockwell Street frontage of the appeal premises, two black canvas umbrellas with printed valances would be introduced to the outside seating area along with low-level barriers, with only three displaying the Company logo. The features would be proportionate additions to the long frontage of the property with advertising material that would have a low-key presence when seen from the road. An internally illuminated menu would also be displayed in a black metal case in front of the central column to the main entrance steps. In this position, the menu case would be an inconspicuous feature that would not unduly disrupt the uniform character of the steps. Taken together, these proposals would be minor with no visual disharmony caused to the character and qualities of the host building or the streetscapes.
11. For all these reasons, the advertisements would cause no harm to the amenity of the area. The effect on the CA and the buffer zone to the WHS would be neutral. Consequently, the character and appearance of these heritage assets would be preserved. Subject to the five standard conditions set out in the Regulations, the appeal is allowed.

Gary Deane INSPECTOR