
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 20 May 2024

by Alison Scott (BA Hons) Dip TP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 June 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/V5570/Z/24/3337829

196 Old Street, London, EC1V 9FR

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended) against a decision to grant express consent.
 - The appeal is made by London Lites Ltd against the decision of London Borough of Islington.
 - The application Ref P2023/3039/ADV dated 20 October 2023 and express consent was refused by noticed dated 8 December 2023.
 - The advertisement permitted is One LED digital Advertisement Display. Replacement of previous advertisement display.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I note the change in description by the council described as '*Advertisement consent for the display of no.1 LED digital advertisement display*' and I consider this accurately describes what is before me.
3. As this appeal relates to an advertisement consent, in accordance with the Regulations¹, their effect on amenity and public safety are the only matters to consider. Therefore, I have taken into account the provisions of the development plan so far as they are material.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the proposed advertisement on amenity and public safety.

Reasons

Amenity

5. The appeal site is the east facing flank wall of 196 Old Street. There are currently no adverts displayed on the elevation apart from a low-level advert associated with the Shell garage. A high level and integral company name is inscribed into the wall here. As the wall sits forward of the attached extension that sits perpendicular to this gable end, this elevation is highly prominent within the street scene.
6. The proposed advert would take the forms of a modern, digital four metres by six metres LED display with changing content around every ten seconds, with

¹ Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

its location and orientation affording views from the passing motorist and pedestrian from various vantages.

7. I could see that digital display adverts are not a new feature within the locality and surround the Old Street roundabout and to adjacent Albert House. These digital displays are however not the same advertisement as the proposal before me as they are not of the same moving motion style as the content does not change at frequent rotational intervals. Also, these adverts are seen as a combination in very close quarters to the Old Street underground station and their context is experienced in a very modern backdrop of high-rise contemporary developments.
8. The site before me is set away from these adverts and would be situated upon a traditional building in a position where the character of the area is starting to change away from the much more commercial and modern hub. This advert would introduce a high level and new form of digital display to a corner where no adverts of this nature are currently present. A gable end as this with its existing and limited advertisement content provides visual relief within this urban environment.
9. As a consequence of its scale, high level location, LED technology with changing display at frequent intervals would not integrate positively into its context. It would introduce a garish and discordant feature that would appear as incongruous and would thus cause visual harm to the amenity of the local area.
10. Although the appellant explains that the wall displayed an earlier advert, this has since been removed and I am obliged to consider the proposal before me.
11. To conclude, I have taken into account the provisions of the development plan so far as they are material. On this basis it would not meet the broad amenity aims and objectives of Policy DH6 of the Islington Strategic and Development Management Policies Document, and the National Planning Policy Framework that advises against advertisements that are poorly sited and designed.

Public safety

12. The site is located in a busy transport hub with good access to public services, bus and cycle lanes and is a main arterial route. It would be positioned close to forecourt of the Shell garage with its access points onto the main road as well as the junction with Mallow Street and Old Street, close by. At the time of my visit there was much pedestrian, cycle and vehicular movements in all directions.
13. I was aware that due to the volume of traffic, the combination of bus route and cycle lanes, the area was well controlled by a number of traffic lights to ease movement. Therefore, all speeds were low and vehicle and cycle idling was present along the roads. Although this type of sign would be a new feature here, given the road network management, I do not consider it would be such a distraction to motorists, cyclist or pedestrians to lead to conflict with public safety.
14. On the basis that public safety would be safeguarded, the proposal would accord with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework that advises against advertisements that are poorly sited and designed.

Balance and Conclusion

15. Although I find no conflict with the proposed advertisement and public safety, nevertheless I find conflict with amenity and for this reason the appeal is dismissed and advertisement consent is refused.

Alison Scott

INSPECTOR

