



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 July 2024

by Katie McDonald MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30 July 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/Z/24/3341471

232-240 Chiswick High Road, Chiswick, Hounslow, London W4 1PJ

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended) against a refusal to grant express consent.
 - The appeal is made by Marks & Spencer PLC against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref is 00248/232-240/AD1.
 - The advertisement proposed is described as external replacement signage.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and express consent is granted for the display of:
 - i. a front fascia sign measuring 18.99m (L) by 1.12m (H) comprising halo lit 3D black letters (RAL 9005) to be applied to a white metal faced sign (Ral 9003). Illumination levels at 600 cd/m².
 - ii. rear fascia sign measuring 4.29m (L) by 1.11m (H) comprising halo lit 3D black letters (RAL 9005) to be applied to white metal faced sign (RAL9003). Illumination levels at 600 cd/m².
 - iii. projecting bus stop sign measuring 0.96m (L) by 0.96m (H) comprising halo lit 3D black letters (RAL9005) to be applied to a white bus stop metal fascia sign (RAL 9003). Illumination levels at 600 cd/m².in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 00248/232-240/AD1 and drawing Nos 08901 Rev 02, 08903, 22901 Rev 01, 22902 Rev 01. The consent is for 5 years from the date of this decision and is subject to the five standard conditions set out in Schedule 2 of the 2007 Regulations.

Preliminary Matter

2. An updated plan was provided with the appeal, drawing No 08901 Rev 02, which corrects a drawing error. The change is not substantive and there would be no prejudice to any parties. I have dealt with the appeal accordingly.

Main Issue

3. This is the effect of the proposed signage on the amenity of the area.

Reasons

4. The site is a part 3-storey, part 2-storey, part single-storey building which is presently occupied by a supermarket at ground floor level. The site is located to the north of Chiswick High Road, in the primary shopping area and shop frontage of Chiswick Town Centre. It is also located in the Chiswick High Road Conservation Area (CA) and the building itself is identified as a positive contributor within the Chiswick High Road Conservation Area Appraisal (2021).

5. I have had regard to the duty in S72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, that requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a CA, in so far as it relates to the consideration of 'amenity'. The special interest of the CA lies primarily in its development as a high-quality shopping street in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and the survival of the buildings from this age. Shop fronts, canopies and signs play an important role in the streetscape of the conservation area.
6. The proposal is for the replacement of 2 internally illuminated fascia signs, one at the front and one at the rear, and one projecting sign to the front. The Council's Shopfront Guidance states that internally illuminated signs will not normally be permitted in Conservation Areas, and externally illuminated signs are preferable. The Guidance does not prohibit internally illuminated signs, but it details that the brightness and style of illuminated signs should be in keeping with the area in which they are located, to minimise light pollution for residents and safety implications for drivers. The proposal would have no effect upon residents or drivers.
7. Furthermore, the area is a lively and vibrant place, and features advertisements in various shapes and forms, many of which are internally illuminated, such as the site itself. These do not harm the significance of the CA, but are merely part of the context of the high street. The proposed advertisements would be congruent with the surroundings, being a sensitively positioned fascia sign with proportionate lettering and appropriately designed projecting sign. The advertisement to the rear of the building is wholly appropriate in the context of the servicing nature of the area.
8. Moreover, the illumination would be halo, which is a soft type of lighting that only illuminates the internal letters of the advertisement. There would be less lettering than the existing signage, and the proposals would not cause glare or excessively light up the surrounding area. This is even considering the 600cd/m^2 , which incidentally, is an appropriate level of luminance for this setting and type of advertisement.
9. Therefore, the proposals would have an acceptable effect on the CA and amenity. I have considered policies CC1, CC2, CC4 and CC5 of the London Borough of Hounslow Local Plan 2015-2030 (September 2015) and the National Planning Policy Framework which seek to protect amenity and so are material in this case. The proposal would not conflict with these policies.

Conditions

10. I have not required the signage to be 300cd/m^2 for the reasons set out above. Additionally, it would be unnecessary to require the express consent to expire after 5 years. This is because there is no evidence to indicate that the advertisements would be unacceptable after 5 years.

Conclusion

11. For the reasons set out above, the appeal is allowed.

Katie McDonald

INSPECTOR