

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 August 2024

by Graham Wraight BA(Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 6 September 2024

Appeal Ref: APP/Q4245/Z/24/3340084

Trafford Hall Hotel, 23 Talbot Road, Trafford, Old Trafford M16 0PE

- 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 ARM Capital against the decision of Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 112390/ADV/23.
 - The advertisement proposed is the installation of a single digital billboard.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on amenity.

Reasons

3. The proposed advertisement would be located within the grounds of Trafford Hall Hotel, a former public hall building which is identified as a non-designated heritage asset in the Civic Quarter Area Action Plan (CQAAP). The area in the immediate vicinity of the appeal site is predominantly commercial in its nature with other advertisements, including similar billboard displays, present close by. Notwithstanding this, much of the area has a pleasant spacious and verdant character, and the street scene to the south-west is generally free of any notable advertisements.
4. The proposal would appear collectively in views taken of Trafford Hall looking down Talbot Road. It would be a large display which would be internally illuminated and it would be prominently positioned on a bend in the road and close to the back edge of the pavement. There would be harm to amenity caused because it would compete with and draw attention away from the front elevation of Trafford Hall, detracting notably from the positive visual contribution that this frontage makes to the street scene.
5. Furthermore, although there are similar billboards nearby, these do not appear in views taken looking in a south-western direction. In that direction there is nothing comparable to the appeal proposal either in terms of billboards or other large advertisements. On the contrary, views in this

direction are framed by the uncluttered nature of Talbot Road and the extensive greenery alongside it, with such views extending a considerable way into the distance. In that context, the proposed billboard would be an incongruous addition, and this too would result in harm to the amenity of the surrounding area.

6. There is other signage located at the hotel, in particular on its front boundary, however I have no details as to the history of that signage and how it came to be in place. But in any event, whilst the appellant refers to the appeal proposal reducing advertisement clutter at the appeal property, it is not suggested that those other signs would be removed or indeed what mechanism might be available to secure their removal if the appeal proposal were to be permitted. I do not therefore afford this matter weight in my consideration of the appeal.
7. For these reasons, I conclude that the proposed billboard would cause significant harm to amenity due to its size, positioning, internal illumination and its close proximity to Trafford Hall. I have taken into account Policy L7 of the Core Strategy 2012 and Policies 5 and 6 of the CQAAP and the Advertisements Supplementary Planning Guidance 1995 which seek to protect amenity and non-designated heritage assets, and so are material to the case, together with paragraph 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Given I have concluded that the proposal would harm amenity and the non-designated heritage asset, the proposal conflicts with these policies.

Other Matters

8. It is stated that digital signage avoids the need to reprint advertisements and that this makes it a sustainable method of display, however this would be in comparison to a traditional poster billboard which is not present at the appeal site. That the sign could be used to display urgent information, for example information relating to Covid, would not justify the harm I have found, which would prevail on a day-to-day basis.
9. Whilst the appellant further refers to the economic benefits that would arise, I can only base my assessment of an advertisement consent appeal on the effect that the proposal would have on the interests of amenity and public safety.

Conclusion

10. For the reasons given above, the appeal should be dismissed.

Graham Wraight

INSPECTOR