



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 November 2024

by G D Jones BSc(Hons) DipTP DMS MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 6th January 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/Z/24/3348055

Building 2 at Greenwich Pier, Cutty Sark Gardens, Greenwich SE10 9HT

- 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 Greenwich Pier Lease Ltd against the decision of the Royal Borough of Greenwich.
 - The application Ref 24/0594/A, dated 21 February 2024, was refused by notice dated 19 April 2024.
 - The advertisement proposed is described as '2 No. raised lettering signage, 2 No. signboard, 1 No. projecting hanging sign, downlights and CCTV cameras to façade and 2 no. signposts.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of the proposed advertisements includes reference to CCTV cameras and downlights. From the information before me I have found no good reason to believe that either of these proposed features would be advertisements in the terms of the 2007 Regulations. On this basis they would not require the express consent sought by the appellant. Accordingly, I have limited my assessment to the proposed advertisements only.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the appeal proposals on amenity.

Reasons

4. The appeal site is located a little to the south of the River Thames within a historically significant area of Greenwich, close to the Cutty Sark and Old Royal Naval College, and within the Greenwich Park Conservation Area and the Maritime Greenwich World Heritage site. The appeal property is currently vacant. The objective appears to be to bring it back into use as a pub, with the proposed advertisements intended to support the new use.
5. Alongside the neighbouring restaurants (Nando's and Zizzi's), the appeal building forms part of a pair of similar buildings. There is also a smaller ticket office structure located between them. Collectively, they form a modern but attractive contrast to the wider, more historic riverside built environment. Much of their success, as relatively recent additions to this sensitive townscape, stems from their design not attempting to mimic the surrounding historic built form. Indeed, the relatively simple, unadorned contemporary

appearance of these structures contribute positively to the area's character and appearance.

6. Due to its positioning at first floor level combined with its substantial size, the proposed fascia 'Ship Tavern' signage would be a very prominent feature out of keeping with and harmful to the design of the existing building. The proposed western signboard would be positioned much lower on the building. Nonetheless, given its considerable size and prominence, it would also amount to an over-dominant addition that would harm the character and appearance of the host building. The 'traditional hand-painted' nature of this sign would also be likely to sit awkwardly with the modern design of the building.
7. The proposed hanging sign and post signs would be far more modest in scale. I also recognise that these features are intended to pay homage to the area's rich history. Nonetheless, their more traditional composition would, in practice, be very much at odds with the modern design of the host building, such that they would also be awkward, discordant additions to the townscape.
8. The harm that would result from the fascia signage, the western signboard, the hanging sign and the post signs would also have a consequentially damaging effect on the character and appearance of the wider nearby historic environment. This would include harm to the significance of the Cutty Sark and Old Royal Naval College, as listed buildings, as well as to the Greenwich Park Conservation Area and the Maritime Greenwich World Heritage site. Given the limited scale of each of these proposed advertisements, this wider harm would be modest. Nonetheless, due to the importance of these heritage assets, the weight attached to the harm is significant.
9. While the advertisements would assist with bringing the building back into use, there is no evidence that this could not be achieved otherwise or with the support of other advertisements that would be more in-keeping with their context. Overall, the potential public benefits of the scheme are at best modest and would be comfortably outweighed by the harm to heritage assets as outlined above.
10. In contrast to the advertisements discussed above, the proposed 'Trafalgar Tavern' signboard would sit more comfortably on the building bearing in mind its modest scale, siting and simple design. While I note the Council's comments in terms of it relating to premises elsewhere, such considerations do not alter how the advertisement would affect 'amenity'. Accordingly, this signboard alone would not be unacceptable.
11. I have also taken into account the wider evidence, including in relation to other existing advertisements in the vicinity of the site. I recognise that those advertisements exercise an influence on the character and appearance of the area. Nonetheless, they are all different in appearance to the proposed advertisements. Moreover, while some are located on the neighbouring restaurant building or were previously on the appeal building, the rest have a very different immediate context compared to the appeal scheme. Accordingly, they carry limited weight and have not had a significant bearing on the outcome of the appeal.
12. For the foregoing reasons, therefore, the fascia signage, the western signboard, the hanging sign and the post signs would all have a harmful effect on amenity, including in terms of the historic environment. Consequently, in

those regards, they would conflict with Policies D3 (design-led approach), HC1 (heritage conservation) and HC2 (World Heritage Sites) of the London Plan, March 2021, and Policies DH1 (design), DH3 (heritage assets), DH4 (Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site), DH(h) (Conservation Areas) and DH(i) (Listed Buildings) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan: Core Strategy with Detailed Policies, July 2014.

Other Matters

13. Given my conclusions regarding the proposed 'Trafalgar Tavern' signboard, I have considered whether to make a 'split decision'. I have, however, opted not to allow that part of the proposals on the basis that that sign alone would be unlikely to be sufficient for the pub operator's purposes, such that other additional advertisements would be sought. On that basis, the proposed 'Trafalgar Tavern' signboard should be assessed and determined by the decision-maker in the context of those wider proposals in order to assess the full effects of the proposals at large.

Conclusion

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

G D Jones

INSPECTOR