



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 December 2024

by Samuel Watson BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14th January 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/B4215/Z/24/3349287

326 Barlow Moor Road, Manchester M21 8AY

- 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 Wildstone Estates Limited against the decision of Manchester City Council.
 - The application Ref is 139964/AOH/2024.
 - The advertisement proposed is the replacement of 48-sheet advertisement poster board with a digital advertising screen (6m(wide) x 3m (height)).
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The Council have drawn my attention to the policies it considered to be relevant to this appeal and I have taken them into account as material considerations. However, power to control advertisements may be exercised only in the interests of amenity and public safety and therefore the policies alone have not been decisive.

Main Issue

3. The Council found the proposal would have no harmful effects on public safety. As such, the main issue in this case is the effect of the proposal on the visual amenity of the surrounding area.

Reasons

4. The appeal site's immediate context is a main thoroughfare bound by primarily low-scale development on both sides. The development is largely formed of mixed use terraces serving as commercial on the ground floor with accommodation on the upper floors. There are some examples of purpose built commercial properties such as fast food outlets and a garage, but these are equally small-scale. The appeal advertising board is attached to the side of a traditional terrace house and sits perpendicular to the road, facing over a lane towards the side of an adjacent mixed used property.
5. The advertising in the area around the appeal site is primarily signage connected to an associated business and is of a small and varied kind. Collectively this signage and advertising contributes to a lively street scene commensurate with the level of commercial development. Although there are two larger and internally illuminated adverts, serving a McDonalds and a garage, these are not so significant as to affect the overall character of the area.

6. The current poster board is prominently sited but, as it is not directly illuminated, either internally or externally, its presence within the street scene is somewhat softened. Therefore, although the scale of the existing board exceeds that typically found within the street scene, it is not so visually intrusive as to erode the amenity of the surrounding area. In contrast, the proposed digital advertising screen would be internally illuminated day and night and I consider that, given the scale of the screen and its prominent siting, this would result in a significant and intrusive feature. I find that this would also be an incongruous feature against the design and appearance of the surrounding commercial buildings and advertising.
7. I do not, however, find there to be any visual clutter resulting from the replacement of the existing board with the proposed screen. In terms of scale and siting the proposal would be a like-for-like replacement and so any clutter would be existing.
8. Nevertheless, the proposal would, by way of its internal illumination and character as a digital advertising screen, be detrimental to the amenity of the surrounding area. I have been mindful of, and the proposal would also conflict with Policies SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy Development Plan document and Policy DC15 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester. These policies collectively, and amongst other matters, seek for proposals to respect and relate properly to the character and identity of the local area. The proposal would also conflict with Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) including Paragraphs 135 and 141.

Other Matters

9. There is no indication in the Regulations, Framework or Planning Practice Guidance that any other factors can be taken into account either for, or against, a proposal. Whilst the appellant has made reference to a number of potential benefits stemming from the proposal, these do not directly relate to the matters upon which an advertisement case can be considered, namely amenity and public safety.

Conclusion

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

Samuel Watson

INSPECTOR