
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 May 2017

by Richard Schofield BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 18 May 2017

Appeal Ref: APP/D1780/Z/17/3171579

**Boldrewood Campus, University of Southampton, Burgess Road,
Southampton SO16 7QF**

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 against a refusal to grant express consent.
 - The appeal is made by University of Southampton against the decision of Southampton City Council.
 - The application Ref 16/01906/ADV, dated 7 November 2016, was refused by notice dated 17 February 2017.
 - The advertisement proposed is a 'sense of arrival' campus sign (illuminated) sited close to the Burgess Road/Bassett Avenue junction.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and express consent is granted for the display of a 'sense of arrival' campus sign (illuminated) sited close to the Burgess Road/Bassett Avenue junction as applied for. The consent is for five years from the date of this decision and is subject to the five standard conditions set out in the Regulations and the additional conditions contained in the Schedule to this decision.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed sign on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The proposed sign would be set back from the corner of Bassett Avenue and Burgess Road on what is acknowledged as being a busy crossroads on a primary access/egress route to/from the city. The wider area lacks any obvious signage and its verdant character is derived largely from the presence of significant numbers of mature trees.
 4. Nonetheless, the area immediately around the location of the proposed sign features a proliferation of traffic lights, with associated paraphernalia, as well as directional signs and numerous street lights. The modern, multi-storey Lloyds Register building on the university campus is also an imposing presence in the street scene at this point.
 5. Given this context, the proposed sign would not appear alien. Situated back from the road junction, contained between the mature evergreen and birch trees around it, viewers would see the sign positioned behind, and below the level of, a cluster of tall traffic light columns. The main backdrop of the Lloyds
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Register building would remain the dominant feature beyond. Any views of the sign from Southampton Common, across the junction, would be in this context and would not, therefore, be adversely affected by the sign's presence.

6. The proposed low level, directional illumination, to be controlled by condition, would not appear particularly intrusive given the presence of the street lights and traffic lights around the crossroads. It is also reasonable to consider that lights from within the Lloyds Register building would appear behind the sign in the evenings during the autumn and winter months.

Other Matters

7. The Council has drawn my attention to policies in the adopted development plans. While I have taken them into account as material considerations, the powers to control advertisements under the Regulations may be exercised only in the interests of amenity and public safety. Consequently, they have not been decisive in my determination of the appeal.

Conditions

8. The additional conditions are necessary in the interests of visual amenity and tree protection.

Conclusion

9. To be clear, this decision should not be seen as a precedent for the proliferation of additional signage on this otherwise green, low key approach to Southampton. It is a decision that turns on the immediate context of the proposed sign, rather than an acceptance that the wider area is necessarily an appropriate location for such signs *per se*.
10. I conclude, therefore, that the proposed sign would not have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. Thus, the appeal should be allowed.

Richard Schofield

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Additional Conditions

- 1) The intensity of the illumination of the sign permitted by this consent shall be no greater than 180cd/m² and the lighting shall be directed at the sign only.
- 2) No operation in connection with the development hereby permitted shall commence on site until a site specific Arboricultural Method Statement in respect of the protection of the trees in the immediate vicinity of the sign's proposed location during all aspects of work on site is submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. It will be written with contractors in mind and will include the following:
 - Specification for the location and erection of protective fencing around all vegetation to be retained; for the installation of any additional root protection measures; for the removal of any built structures, including hard surfacing, within protective fencing areas; for the construction of hard surfaces where they impinge on tree roots; and for soft landscaping practices within tree protection zones or the canopy of the trees, whichever is greatest.
 - The location of site compounds, storage areas, car parking, site offices, site access, heavy/large vehicles (including cranes and piling rigs), as necessary; and
 - An arboricultural management strategy, to include details of any necessary tree surgery works, the timing and phasing of all arboricultural works and protection measures.

Once approved the Arboricultural Method Statement will be adhered to throughout the duration of the development works on site.