
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 28 May 2025

by **L J O'Brien BA (Hons) MA MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 27 June 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/Z/25/3359066

The Lost Hour, 217-219 Greenwich High Road, LONDON, SE10 8NB

- The appeal is made under section 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 Stonegate Pub Company against the decision of Royal Borough of Greenwich.
 - The application Ref is 24/3228/A.
 - The advertisement proposed is 1 set of externally illuminated fascia text, 1 set of non illuminated fascia text, 1 externally illuminated projection sign and 1 non illuminated hand painted decoration to fascia/shopfront.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and express consent is granted for the display of the advertisements 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.

Preliminary Matters

2. At the time of my site visit works had commenced at the appeal site. For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of clarity, I have considered the proposal on the basis of the submitted plans.
3. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) was updated in December 2024, during the consideration of this appeal. Insofar as is directly relevant to the appeal, there are no substantive changes and no parties have been prejudiced as a result.
4. Powers under the Regulations to control advertisements may be exercised only in the interests of amenity and where appropriate public safety, taking account of any material factors. The Council has drawn to my attention the policies it considers relevant and I have taken them into account as a material consideration though they have not, by themselves, been decisive in reaching my determination on this appeal.

Main Issue

5. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the advertisements on visual amenity; including the effect on the setting of nearby listed buildings, whether or not the proposed development would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the West Greenwich Conservation Area and the effect on the Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site Buffer Zone.

Reasons

6. The appeal property is a public house situated on Greenwich High Road; a fairly wide and regularly trafficked road. The surrounding area is largely commercial in nature with a variety of buildings of differing designs, characters and appearances and a busy, urban character and appearance.
7. The site is within Greenwich Town Centre, the West Greenwich Conservation Area (CA) and is within the buffer zone for the Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site (WHS). The West Greenwich Conservation Area Appraisal sets out that the CA is significant for the quality of its townscape and the diversity of its architecture.
8. A number of other heritage assets are nearby. The neighbouring property at No. 221 is a locally listed building due to its design and materials. Nos 199-213 Greenwich High Road are a Grade II listed group comprising four pairs of houses. The listing description for these properties states that the buildings are constructed in stock brick with some rendered areas and slate roofs with central stacks; the symmetry of the buildings characterises the group. Opposite the appeal site is the Grade II listed former Greenwich Town Hall which is clad in brick and is considered to be an important example of a 1930s municipal building.
9. I am required by Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (The Act) to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA. In addition to the requirement under section 72 of The Act, the CA is also a designated heritage asset as defined by the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), which seeks to ensure that heritage assets are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. Similarly the Framework refers to World Heritage Sites within its consideration of Heritage Assets.
10. The Framework states in paragraph 141 that the quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed. As set out in the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007, advertisements should be subject to control in the interests of amenity and public safety, and factors relevant to amenity include the general characteristics of the locality, including the presence of any feature of historic, architectural, cultural or similar interest. Therefore, as the Planning Practice Guidance explains, if the locality where an advertisement is to be displayed has important scenic, historic, architectural or cultural features, consideration should be given to whether it is in scale and in keeping with these features.
11. In accordance with the Regulations, I have taken into account the provisions of the development plan so far as they are material. Of particular relevance to the appeal proposal are Policies DH(e) and DH(f) of the Royal Greenwich Local Plan Core Strategy with Detailed Policies, July 2014 (CS). Amongst other things, these policies state that new shopfronts, including fascias and signs, should be designed to respect the established proportions in the immediate area. The policies are also clear that advertisement consent will only be given where the proposal would not have an adverse effect on amenity or on heritage assets and would harmonise with the scale and character of the surrounding area.
12. Also of relevance are CS Policy DH1 and Policy D3 of The London Plan, 2021 (The London Plan) which seek high quality design, CS Policies DH(h), DH3, DH4 and TC4 which together state that the Borough will protect, preserve and enhance

heritage assets, including conservation areas, the historic character of Greenwich Town Centre and the Outstanding Universal Value of the WHS. I have also considered Policies HC1 and HC2 of the London Plan which similarly seek to protect heritage assets.

13. The proposed advertisements would have similar placements to others which have been previously consented. In the interests of clarity I have considered each element of the wider scheme in the paragraphs that follow, before turning to an assessment of the proposal as a whole.
14. The proposed signage reading “Lost Hour” would be flat cut 19mm foamex lettering which would be externally illuminated. The text reading “a social pub and kitchen” would be vinyl applied to the panel face. Though the lettering would not be hand painted it would be broadly consistent with previously consented signage at the appeal site. Moreover, in my view, the lettering is clear and simple in design and is of a scale that is clearly compatible with the shopfront and the building as a whole.
15. The appeal site is also within the Greenwich Town Centre Article 4 Direction, 2016 (Article 4 Direction) which deals with the exterior painting and colour of buildings with the aim of ensuring colour is used in a coordinated manner in order to protect the character and appearance of the area. The advertisements, with the exception of the hand painted graphic, would sit comfortably within the suggested colours for the area.
16. The proposed graphic would be hand painted in bright colours and would extend down from the fascia onto the shopfront itself. Though the colours would be bright they would be within a complementary scheme and would cover only a small part of the fascia and shopfront and would not, therefore, appear visually jarring or dominant. The wider area is a busy urban area and the use of bright colours such as this is an appropriate reflection of the bright and vibrant nature of the area in keeping with those characteristics. I find that the graphic would add detail and visual interest and would be compatible with the host building and the surrounding area.
17. The proposed projection hanging sign would be constructed of aluminium panels finished in satin pearl night blue with an inset vinyl digital print. Though the sign would be aluminium the use of a complementary colour palette, in line with the expectations of the Article 4 Direction, would ensure that this use of materials would assimilate well with the building and the wider area. Moreover, the wider area has a number of examples of mixed materials and modern street furniture and signage is commonplace. As such the proposal would not appear incongruous in this regard.
18. The sign would be sited in a central location at first floor level, above the shopfront and fascia. The top of the sign would be broadly in line with the decorative brick course above the first floor windows and the bottom would allow sufficient gap between the sign and the fascia so as not to appear visually cluttered. These visual alignments would ensure that the sign would complement the existing articulation of the building. Though the sign would be higher than the fascia, I consider that a lower placement would have the potential to appear visually intrusive and to break up the clean lines and simplicity of the fascia to the detriment of the overall character and appearance of the building.

19. The hanging sign would be reasonably discreet, in keeping with the palette, scale and proportions of the building as a whole and, as such, I consider that the sign would sit comfortably in this location.
20. When viewed from the southern end of Greenwich High Road, due to the topography of the area and intervening screening, direct views of the proposed advertisements in the context of the nearby listed buildings would be limited and the proposal and the listed buildings are unlikely to be 'read' together. Moreover, even when direct views of the proposal in direct juxtaposition with the heritage assets are possible the contrast between the buildings would be similar to the existing contrast between the other buildings in the area; the utilitarian Greenwich Town Hall against the more intricate Greenwich Library building for instance. The area is diverse and bustling and the proposal would echo this character and appearance. Consequently, I find that the proposal would not have an adverse effect on the setting of the nearby listed buildings. Similarly, the significance of the CA and the factors that contribute to the Outstanding Universal Value of the WHS would be protected.
21. For the reasons set out above, I consider that each element of the proposal would, in and of itself, be sympathetic to, and compatible with the host building and the wider area. I also find that the proposal when considered as a whole would appear as a thoughtfully constructed scheme with no one element appearing visually dominant or competing with another. The proposed advertisements would appear as a cohesive scheme which would sit comfortably within its context.
22. I therefore consider that the advertisements would not conflict with the development plan as they would respect the established proportions in the immediate area and harmonise with the scale and character of the surrounding area. As such, the proposal would not cause harm to amenity. Furthermore, the proposal would not cause harm to the setting of the nearby listed buildings, would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA and Greenwich Town Centre and would protect the Outstanding Universal Value of the WHS.

Conclusion

23. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

L J O'Brien

INSPECTOR