
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 10 June 2025

by **C Livingstone MA(SocSci) (Hons) MSc MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 15 July 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/U5930/Z/24/3357782

Central Reservation, Adjacent to Green Man Interchange Roundabout, Waltham Forest E11 2PH

- 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 Mrs Joanne Woodward, Marketing Force Limited, against the decision of Waltham Forest London Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 242371.
 - The advertisement proposed is 1 verge midi static advertising sign.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. A research study¹ and Government Road Collision Data (2022) were submitted in support of this appeal. However, I cannot be certain that all interested parties are aware of this information. Therefore, they would not be aware of the findings and its possible implications in relation to the proposal. The appeals procedural guide makes it clear that it is important that what is considered by the Inspector is essentially what was considered by the local planning authority, and on which interested individuals' views were sought. To do otherwise could unacceptably prejudice the interests of parties and on this basis, I have determined the appeal without taking this information into consideration.
3. In relation to advertisements, paragraph 141 of The National Planning Policy Framework states: "The quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed. A separate consent process within the planning system controls the display of advertisements, which should be operated in a way which is simple, efficient and effective. Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts".

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the advertisement on amenity; and
 - the effect of the advertisement on public safety.

¹ Oviedo-Trespalacios et al, "The impact of road advertising signs on driver behaviour and implications for road safety: A critical systematic review," Elsevier (2019)

Reasons

The advertisement

5. The advertisement board would be approximately 2m high and 2.4m wide with the base set 700mm above ground level. The advert would be supported by three posts and would be non-illuminated. The appellant advises that the advertisement would promote local businesses. The details submitted do not provide any detail as to the content of the advertisement, or that it would relate to the locality. The drawing titled 'TFL Midi-Static Specification' shows an advertisement area illustrated with "ADVERTISE HERE" and a telephone number and e-mail address for marketing force.

Amenity

6. The appeal site is located at the Green Man roundabout, which is a large interchange between the A12 trunk road and several local roads. The area within and around the interchange includes mature trees and open verges that are grassed or block paved. The wider area is largely suburban comprising residential developments and parkland giving a semi-rural feel.
7. The advertisement would be positioned on a small, grassed verge separating a slip road onto the A12 from the A114 towards Walthamstow; where there are a number of lighting columns and highway signs. This is an attractive well-established suburban area, although there is a large Tesco supermarket in the vicinity. Considering the size of the verge the proposed advertisement board would be overly dominant and out of place in this environment, it would also make the roundabout more cluttered. The harm to the amenity of the area is not lessened by an absence of heritage assets.
8. For the reasons detailed above the proposed advertisement would have a harmful effect on the amenity of the area. I have taken into account Policy D4 of the London Plan 2021 (LonP) and Policies 45, 53 and 59 of the Waltham Forest Local Plan Part 1 Shaping the Borough 2020-2035 (WFLP) which seek to ensure the delivery of good design and require that signs respect the character of the area, avoid the creation of street clutter; and respond appropriately to their context in terms of scale, height and massing. Given I have concluded that the proposal would harm amenity, it conflicts with these policies.

Public safety

9. The Highways Officer has raised concerns regarding the location of the proposed sign and its potential to distract vehicle users, especially on the approach to traffic signals, as well as the sign being sited on the left, whereas traffic veers to the right. They consider that their concerns in this regard are exacerbated by the conflicting traffic in the area which could increase the risk for both minor and/or major incidents. In light of this, Highways do not support this proposal and recommend refusal.
10. As detailed above the advertisement board would be located on a large roundabout which marks a convergence point of a busy trunk road, several local roads and pedestrian routes. It therefore carries substantial levels of traffic compared to most situations on the suburban fringe. Nevertheless, highway engineering has produced a geometry that provides for a safe transit through the junctions for motorised

traffic, whilst also catering for pedestrians, at least to the extent of the provision of pedestrian links under the roundabout. Beyond the slip road, there is some complication with the highway becoming a red route clearway at the A12; there are signs at the entrance of the slip road to notify road users of this.

11. Notwithstanding the Highway Officers concerns, my attention has been drawn to TfL's Guidance for Digital Roadside Advertising and Proposed Best Practice (2013) and the appellant quotes its findings, which stated that : *"Based on the literature review and on our own knowledge and experience of the field it is considered that there is no demonstrable proof that advertisements cause traffic collisions"*. As such, there is compelling evidence before me to demonstrate that while advertisements attract attention, they do not necessarily distract highway users.
12. Based on the evidence before me the proposed advertisement would not have a harmful effect on public safety. I have taken into account Policies 53 and 59 of the WFLP which seek to provide appropriate safe and legible physical and visual connections that knit well into surrounding streets, routes and the public realm. They also require that advertisements are well integrated into the public realm allowing for ease of pedestrian access and highway safety. Given I have concluded that the proposal would not harm public safety, the proposal does not conflict with these policies.
13. Policy D4 of the LP relates to the delivery of good design and Policy 45 of the WFLP relates to the principle of shopfront and signage proposals and are not a material consideration in my assessment of the advertisement in regard to public safety.

Other Matters

14. My attention has been drawn to several appeals where the Inspector found that the advertisement would harm the amenity of the area. In these examples the roundabouts were mostly smaller and appeared to be within a suburban location. However, each appeal is determined on its own merits and identified harm in these contexts does not remove the potential for harm in other locations.
15. The appellant has also provided several examples of appeals where the Inspector found that the advertisements would not harm amenity. In these examples the Inspector found that the appeal sites were commercial or industrial in nature or the areas over-riding character in the immediate vicinity was defined by traffic management. For the reasons detailed above I am not certain that the examples provided reflect the circumstances in the appeal before me.

Conclusion

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

C Livingstone

INSPECTOR