



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 26 June 2025

by **S Hunt BA (Hons), MA, MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 July 2025

Appeal A: APP/N4720/H/25/3361441

26-27 Park Row, Leeds, LS1 5QB

- 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 Chokdee Ltd against the decision of Leeds City Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/06758/ADV.
 - The advertisement proposed is Installation of 4 curved awning advertisements to ground floor windows on South Parade frontage.
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Appeal B: APP/N4720/Y/25/3361442

26-27 Park Row, Leeds, LS1 5QB

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Chokdee Ltd against the decision of Leeds City Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/06757/LI.
 - The works proposed are Installation of 12 curved awnings to ground floor windows on Bedford Street, Park Row and South Parade frontages.
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Decision

1. Appeal A: the appeal is dismissed.
2. Appeal B: the appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

3. I have dealt with both appeals together in my reasoning given that they are related to the same building and have common issues. Appeal A (advertisements) only applies to the South Parade elevation of the building. The reasons for the other two elevations being subject to deemed advertisement consent under schedule 3 (1) class 5 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 has not been clarified, nonetheless I have dealt with the appeal as applied for.
4. The appeal property is a listed building, is proximate to other listed buildings, and is located within a conservation area (CA). I am therefore mindful of sections 16(2), 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).

Main Issues

5. The main issues are whether the proposal preserves the significance of the Grade II listed building, 26 and 27 Park Row (ref. 1375423), the setting of nearby listed buildings, and whether the proposal preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the Leeds City Centre CA. Specifically in terms of Appeal A is the effect of the advertisements on visual amenity.

Reasons

6. The appeal property is a grand and ornate former bank and insurance company premises dating from the early 20th century by Perkin and Bulmer. It directly fronts Park Row, South Parade and Bedford Street, with two corner entrances. It has an imposing presence on all of these streets, where it directly abuts the public footways. It has been converted to a restaurant use.
7. The CA covers a large and varied area of the city centre. The northern section of Park Row leading towards the Headrow contains some of its most characterful and grand buildings, many of them being former financial institutions. Whilst a number of the buildings have been subject to alterations associated with their conversion to other uses, the additions and signage are generally small in size and number and respond positively to the host buildings. Nearby heritage assets include 28-30 Park Row, Sovereign House 1 and 2 South Parade, 18 Park Row and 19-20 Park Row, all Grade II listed.
8. The special interest of the listed building, in so far as it relates to these appeals, derives from its grand and imposing presence, innovative use of materials (Marmo, an imitation marble faience produced locally by the Leeds Fireclay Company), ornate detailing and the hierarchical classical fenestration of wide segmental arched ground floor windows (four to each elevation).
9. The building, together with the group of similarly grand neighbouring buildings (which share some of the architectural characteristics including large arched headed ground floor windows at 19-20 Park Row), make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the CA.
10. It is proposed to install domed individual awnings to all twelve ground floor windows. They would be affixed to the timber frames of the windows and set partially within the existing reveals, following the curve of each arch, below the central ornamental keystones. The advertised name of the restaurant would be in printed text to the valance of each awning.
11. I acknowledge that the awnings have been designed to follow the curve of the window heads, and that they would be fixed to non-original window frames. However these particular windows are of high significance to both the special interest of the listed building and the CA. I find that the addition of the advertisement awnings would disrupt the classical fenestration and, at ground level at least, draw the eye away from other details of the building including the ornate keystones. The prominence of the building situated on the back edge of three pavements, and the prolificacy of the awnings, would dominate a range of dynamic views in this part of the CA.
12. I do not agree with the appellant that the works have been sensitively designed nor would they be of a modest scale. Furthermore, the intended scale, architectural

detailing and prominence of the window openings would fail to remain clearly appreciable. The advertisement awnings would fail to complement the windows and the overall design of the building, disrupting the classical features of all elevations and would represent incongruous interventions in this historic context. The works would result in harm to the significance of the listed building, the setting of neighbouring listed buildings, and both the character and appearance of the CA.

13. For the reasons outlined above, I find that the advertisement awnings would fail to preserve the special interest of the listed building and the significance of the CA. Paragraph 212 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (the NPPF) advises that when considering the impact of development on the significance of designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to their conservation. Paragraph 213 goes on to advise that significance can be harmed through the alteration of those assets or development within its setting, and that any such harm should have a clear and convincing justification. Given the scale of the alterations I find the harm to be less than substantial in this instance. Nevertheless, I give this harm considerable importance and weight.
14. Under such circumstances, paragraph 215 of the NPPF advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing the optimum viability use of the building. The appellant is of the opinion that the installation of awnings would assist in maintaining a comfortable internal environment to the restaurant reducing overheating and glare, consequently reducing the need for artificial air conditioning and reducing carbon emissions. These aims could be achieved through alternative (and much less intrusive) methods such as internal window blinds. As such, I do not consider that the proposal would achieve public benefits which are sufficient to outweigh the harm I have identified.
15. Given the above and in the absence of any significant and substantiated public benefits, I find that the proposal fails to preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II listed host building, the setting of the neighbouring Grade II listed buildings, and the character or appearance of the CA. This fails to satisfy the requirements of the Act and paragraph 210 of the NPPF. It conflicts with the aims of policies P10 and P11 of the Leeds Local Plan Core Strategy (selective review 2019) and policies GP5 and N17 of the Leeds Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (review 2006) which, amongst other things, seek for high quality design appropriate to its context, and to ensure heritage assets are preserved or enhanced.
16. Public safety matters are not cited in the Council's decision. In terms of visual amenity, Regulation 3(2)(a) of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 sets out that relevant factors include the general characteristics of the locality, including the presence of any feature of historic, architectural or cultural interest. In accordance with Regulation 3(1), I have taken into account the provisions of the development plan and other relevant factors. It follows from my conclusions above on heritage assets that the proposal is also detrimental to the interests of amenity, notwithstanding that it applies to a single elevation of the building only. The advertisement application is contrary to UDP policies BD8 and BD9 which seek for signage to be well designed, sensitively located and not detract from visual amenity, the building or the character of the street. The proposal also conflicts with NPPF paragraph 141 which sets out that

poorly sited and designed advertisements can have a negative impact on the quality and character of places.

17. My attention has been drawn to awnings which have been installed to buildings nearby, including at 6 and 7 South Parade. I note that this particular building is not listed and displays few characteristics in common with the appeal building, including its less prominent siting. Furthermore, the awning serves an additional purpose in providing shelter for an outside seating area. The other examples noted by the appellant are incomparable. Whilst awnings may be regularly seen on historic buildings elsewhere, they are an uncharacteristic feature of this part of Leeds city centre CA.

Conclusion

18. For the reasons given above both appeal A and appeal B should be dismissed.

S Hunt

INSPECTOR