
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 June 2025

by **R Gravett BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22nd July 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Q4245/Z/25/3365492

203A Ashley Road, Hale, Trafford WA15 9SQ

- 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 Mr Cong Khanh of M1 Nails Ltd against the decision of Trafford Council.
 - The application Ref is 115407/ADV/25.
 - The advertisement proposed is 1 no. internally illuminated fascia sign and 1 no. internally illuminated projecting sign.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matter

2. I have taken the description of the advertisement from the Council's decision notice as this provides a fuller, more accurate description than the one provided on the application form. However, I have removed the superfluous wording '*advertisement consent sought for retrospective*' from the description. I noted during my site visit that both advertisements are displayed at the appeal property.

Main Issue

3. The Council raised no objection in relation to public safety, subject to conditions. Based on the evidence before me and my site visit, I see no reason to take a different view. Therefore, the main issue is the effect of the advertisements on amenity, having regard to their siting in a conservation area and close to a listed building.

Reasons

4. 203A Ashley Road (No 203A) is within the Hale Station Conservation Area (the CA) which is centred around the station building and includes the section of Ashley Road between Marlborough Road and Crescent Road, as well as surrounding residential streets.
5. The 'Hale Station Conservation Area: Conservation Area Appraisal' (2016) (CAA) assesses the significance of the CA as being principally derived from its late C19th and early C20th architecture which encompasses contrasting polychromatic brickwork in brown, red and white brick often with contrasting string courses, quoins and window surrounds. In accordance with the statutory duty set out in Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act), I have paid special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the CA.

6. While the duty under Section 66 of the Act does not apply to advertisement consents, the advertisement regulations state that factors relevant to amenity include the general characteristics of the locality, including the presence of historic, architectural, cultural or similar interest.
7. No 203A is a commercial unit located on the north side of Ashley Road, a long road comprising predominantly independent shops and restaurants. The CAA identifies that much of the architecture of the CA takes its cue from domestic Revival Arts and Crafts designs. No 203A forms part of a detached early C19th building which positively contributes to the CA, constructed in the characteristic red brick, with timber-framed gables and decorative plasterwork. No 203A and the adjoining unit at 203B Ashley Road have modern shop fronts with a deep fascia panel painted black. However, the two other units within the building have traditional shop front designs with timber or stone stall risers, fascias and recessed doors.
8. The CAA identifies that the retail units and shop fronts along Ashley Road are of architectural value and the eclectic mix of signage relating to independent retailers is a defining characteristic of the area. Although the use of materials and colours do vary, the signage at this end of Ashley Road is typically modest and understated with lettering set against either a black background or a subtle, muted colour. In stark contrast, 203A's fascia sign is made of uPVC with a high gloss finish, and it has a bright pink background with darker pink 'M1 NAILS' lettering which are edged in white. The fascia sign projects the full width of No 203A and just over half the depth of the panel on which it is displayed.
9. As a result of this scale, colour and finish the fascia sign appears an unsympathetic and discordant addition, failing to reflect the prevailing character and appearance of signage along Ashley Road. Further, because of its bright colour, I observed it to be unduly prominent in views across the Bowling Green on the opposite side of the road, identified as significant in the CAA as being the only green, open space within the CA. As a result of this prominence, from here, it would also impose harmfully on the setting of the Grade II listed Ollerbarrow House, the significance of which is derived in part from it being one of the few survivals from before the construction of the railway.
10. The projecting sign is circular and measures around 0.6m in diameter. It is made of uPVC and has a bright pink background with white lettering which is viewed against the black fascia panel to which it has been affixed. I observed that there are few projecting signs at this end, and on this side, of Ashley Road and consequently the projecting sign can be seen for some distance travelling in either direction. Notwithstanding its relatively modest size, its colour and height of around 3m from the ground means that it fails to reflect the subtle signage of its surroundings and is conspicuous in views east and west along Ashley Road, identified as being of significance in the CA.
11. The signage incorporates corporate branding which I acknowledge has been used elsewhere, including on the Costa coffee unit broadly opposite, and it is important to the professional identity of the business. However, the signage conflicts with Policy 23 of the 'Hale Station Conservation Area: Conservation Area Management Plan' (2016). This advises that corporate branding should take some design cues from the area's heritage and individual character to reflect the local identity, rather than a one-size fits-all approach to generic branding. The signage further conflicts

with this policy in so far as it requires that colours should be in harmony with the buildings and not be overly dominant in the streetscene.

12. The fascia and projecting signs are internally illuminated to a level of 800cd/m² which has been designed to be soft and energy-efficient avoiding excessive brightness. The appellant has expressed a willingness to disconnect the illumination and to remove the projecting sign entirely. To an extent, this would reduce the intrusive appearance of the signage, particularly during hours of darkness. However, it would not sufficiently mitigate the harm to visual amenity which I have found results from the scale, bright colour and high gloss finish of the fascia sign.
13. I therefore conclude that the advertisements have a harmful effect on visual amenity including on the setting of the nearby listed building and fail to preserve the character or appearance of the CA. The Council has drawn my attention to policies JP-P1 and JP-P2 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document (2024) and Policy R1 of the Trafford Local Plan Core Strategy (2012). As they seek to protect amenity, I have taken them into account as material considerations. However, powers to control advertisements under the regulations may be exercised only in the interests of amenity and public safety. Consequently, in my determination of this appeal, the Council's policies have not in themselves been decisive.
14. I have also taken account of paragraph 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework which states, amongst other things, that the quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed.

Other Matters

15. The appellant has drawn my attention to other examples of fascia signs within the CA which are in corporate colours, pink or bright in colour, as well as numerous projecting signs. I have limited information before me in respect of these advertisements, but I note the Council's comment that not all benefit from advertisement consent. Further, the CAA identifies that some existing signage is intrusive and inappropriate. Rather than providing justification for the signage in question, if anything, the presence of these examples points to the need for such proposals to be carefully controlled if the character and appearance of the area is to be preserved. In any event, I have considered the appeal scheme based on its own merits and site-specific circumstances.
16. The appellant has raised concern regarding the Council's handling of the application. I also recognise that displaying the signage without consent was a genuine oversight. However, these are matters which have no bearing on the appeal before me, which I have considered solely on its planning merits.

Conclusion

17. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal is dismissed.

R Gravett

INSPECTOR