



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 May 2025 by M Jones

Decision by L McKay MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 August 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/E5900/Z/25/3360530

1-2 Sclater Street, London, E1 6HR

- 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 Blow Up Media UK Ltd against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.
 - The application Ref is PA/24/02170.
 - The advertisement proposed is a temporary decorative scaffold shroud comprising a 1:1 coloured printed replica image of the building façade with an inset sponsors advertising space.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and express consent is granted for the display of a temporary decorative scaffold shroud comprising a 1:1 coloured printed replica image of the building façade with an inset sponsors advertising space at 1-2 Sclater Street, London, E1 6HR in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref PA/24/02170. The consent is for a maximum period of 12 months and is subject to the five standard conditions set out in Schedule 2 of The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (the 'Regulations') and the following additional conditions:
 - 1) The express consent hereby granted shall begin on the first date of the display of the advertisement or by not later than 6 months from the date of this decision, whichever is sooner.
 - 2) Written notice shall be given to the Council of the first date of the display of the advertisement within 7 days of it being displayed.
 - 3) The advertisement hereby granted express consent shall be permanently removed and the use of the site for the display of advertisements will be discontinued 12 months after the first display of the advertisement or upon completion of the external building works, whichever is the sooner.
 - 4) The intensity of the illumination of the advertisement permitted by this consent shall be no greater than 300cd/m² at any time.
 - 5) The advertisement shall only be illuminated between the hours of 0700 and 2300 on any day and the illumination shall be switched off at all other times.
 - 6) The inset advertising area on the shroud shall not exceed 17.7m width x 9.2m height. Any advertisement displayed in the inset advertising area shall only be displayed at the same time as the 1:1 scale image of the building.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Preliminary Matter

3. The Regulations require that applications for the display of advertisements are considered in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking into account the provisions of the development plan, so far as they are material, and any other relevant factors. The Council has referred to policies it considers to be relevant to this appeal, and I have taken them into account as material considerations insofar as they relate to amenity and public safety, but they have not, in of themselves, been decisive in the determination of this appeal.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the proposed advertisement on visual amenity, and in particular whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Redchurch Street Conservation Area; and the effect of the proposed advertisement on public safety.

Reasons for the Recommendation

Visual amenity

5. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) sets out that factors relevant to visual amenity include the general characteristics of the locality, including the presence of any feature of historic, architectural, cultural or similar interest. The PPG provides that buildings being renovated may be considered suitable as temporary sites for shroud advertisements, however it also requires consideration of the local characteristics of the neighbourhood. There is also support in principle in local policy for advertisements that enhance the visual amenity of construction sites.
6. The appeal site comprises an attractive four storey Victorian building in a prominent location at the junction of Sclater Street and Bethnal Green Road. The surrounding area is urban in character with a busy public highway, raised railway line and a high concentration of mixed used commercial and residential buildings, some of which are of a similar age and scale to the appeal building and others which are taller and more modern. From the site there are views towards the large commercial and residential buildings of the northeastern edge of the City of London and a large number of colourful street art installations and large advertisements and signs, including shrouds, all of which add to the area's urban character.
7. The appeal property is not listed but is located within the Redchurch Street Conservation Area (CA) and near to a Grade II Listed building. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special attention to be paid to the desirability of preserving the character or appearance of the CA. The duty applies in advertisement appeals insofar as it relates to the consideration of amenity.
8. The CA is predominantly made up of tightly packed historic streets made up of 2 to 4 storey buildings with a mixture of housing, retail premises and former industrial buildings. The small scale, narrow street pattern of the CA and the pedestrian

friendly ambience and number of architecturally significant buildings gives it a unique feel compared with nearby areas. Large scale advertisements are not a prevailing characteristic of that main part of the CA.

9. The appeal site sits on the southern tip of the CA separated from the main part by the busy Bethnal Green Road. Therefore, it is not located within the heart of the CA and is at a point of transition from the smaller scale streets to the larger scale modern development nearby. The significance of this part of the CA, insofar as it relates to this appeal, is therefore in part derived from the architectural and historic merits of the appeal property itself as well as its proximity to, and relationship with, the Grade II listed building opposite.
10. The proposal would cover the entirety of the building save for the ground floor, and therefore would obscure most of the exterior of the building from public view. Given that the appearance of the building contributes to the character of the local area and CA, covering up these facades would detract from this character and contribution. Therefore, it would harm the visual amenity of the local area and this part of the CA. However, the appeal site and listed building sit in one small part of the CA located away from the tightly packed, small scale streets that give the CA its principal character. Consequently, the harm to the CA as a whole would be limited.
11. Further, the proposal seeks consent for a maximum of 12 months only, and so any effects on visual amenity would be temporary. The planned restoration works to the building should enhance the character and appearance of both the building and the CA in the long term and would require scaffolding to be erected in any event which would, absent this consent, likely be uncovered or covered in standard plain scaffolding sheeting. Therefore, the building is likely to be partly obscured anyway.
12. The 1:1 image of the building on approximately half of the shroud would provide visual interest and be a benefit compared with the alternative of bare scaffolding or plain scaffolding sheeting. Whilst the inset advertisement area would be large, it would be in keeping with the type and size of advertisements and artworks in the local area. However, as it would be illuminated, this would make it particularly prominent in the street scene, especially at night. Therefore, the level and duration of the illumination of the proposed advertisement would need to be limited by condition. Also, to ensure that the benefits of the 1:1 scale image of the building are realised, conditions are necessary to ensure that the advert is only displayed with that image, and to confirm the dimensions of the advertisement. These conditions would reduce the harmful impact of the proposal.
13. The temporary nature of the proposed advertisement would further mitigate the impacts of the proposal. Therefore, subject to conditions and in particular limiting the time period for display, the proposal would not be excessive in size or overbearing on the host building to the point that it harms the visual amenity of the host building and local area.
14. The contribution of the nearby listed building to the CA comes through its distinctive architecture and history. Its setting is as a large building on Bethnal Green Road surrounded by buildings of different sizes and ages. As such, anyone looking at the listed building will already be perceiving the modern, tall buildings surrounding the site and various advertisements and street art installations in the area. The listed building cannot be seen in isolation from this busy, urban context and so the

presence of the advertisement across the road for a temporary period would not have a material impact on its setting and how it is perceived.

15. For these reasons, I am satisfied that the proposed advertisement would preserve the character and appearance of the host building and the CA as a whole for the temporary period proposed. Therefore, the proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on visual amenity on the host building or local area.
16. I have taken into account Policies D.DH10, S.DH1, D.DH2 and S.DH3 of the adopted Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031 (2020) and Policy D3 of the London Plan (2021). These policies, amongst other matters, seek to ensure that advertisements and developments in general are well-designed and complement the character, appearance and visual amenity of the site and surrounding area, and so are material considerations in this case. Given that I have concluded that the proposed shroud would not harm amenity, it does not conflict with these policies.

Public Safety

17. Sclater Street is a relatively quiet, low-traffic highway and Bethnal Green Road is a relatively busy but straight, low speed single carriageway highway with good forward visibility in both directions used by a range of transport modes. There is a pelican crossing on Bethnal Green Road in front of the appeal site. Overall, the highway layout around the appeal site is relatively simple and is not one with increased cognitive demand for road users.
18. There are several existing, clearly visible advertisements, signs and colourful street art installations of varying sizes on Bethnal Green Road near the appeal site including shroud advertisements incorporated as part of the Shoreditch Boxpark. The type of shroud advertisement proposed as well as signs, advertisements and artworks are familiar features in the City Fringe Opportunity Area and along busy urban roads more generally. Therefore, drivers and pedestrians are used to maintaining awareness of the highway environment whilst taking in such advertisements. Consequently, the proposed advertisement would not be an incongruous or unusual addition to the highway environment in this location and so is unlikely to cause undue distraction to highway users when driving or manoeuvring.
19. Highway users approaching the appeal site on the eastbound carriageway of Bethnal Green Road would see the inset advertisement clearly as it wraps around the front of the host building. Highway users approaching on the westbound carriageway would be able to clearly see the inset advertisement but from an oblique angle so it would be less clear.
20. In both cases, the straight nature of the highway, speed restrictions and the location of the proposal means that it would not appear abruptly to drivers but become gradually clearer in long views on the approach. As a result, drivers would have ample time to assimilate to the surrounding environment and to notice any pedestrians waiting to cross the pelican crossing across Bethnal Green Road.
21. Highway users exiting Club Row and Sclater Street to join Bethnal Green Road would notice the advertisement but are required to stop and give way at the respective junctions. This stoppage allows time to observe and navigate the uncomplicated carriageway at the junctions and notice any traffic or pedestrian movement, again reducing any safety concerns.

22. The advertisement would also be visible to pedestrians crossing the roads near the appeal site. However, this type of advertisement is not an unusual feature to see when walking in the local area, so pedestrians are unlikely to be unduly distracted. In any event, there is a pelican crossing to allow pedestrians to cross Bethnal Green Road safely and the junctions with Club Row and Sclater Street require highway users to slow down and give way at the junctions, again reducing risk to pedestrians.
23. In all cases, I recommend a condition to restrict the level and timing of the illumination of the advertisement. This condition would mitigate any risk that road users may be unduly distracted by the advertisement being illuminated, particularly at night and in early mornings when an illuminated sign would be much more prominent in the street scene.
24. For the above reasons, my own observations from my site visit, and subject to the conditions set out above, I consider that the proposal would not cause an undue distraction to highway users or present an unacceptable risk to highway and pedestrian safety. Consequently, it would not harm public safety.
25. I have had regard to Policies D.DH10 and S.TR1 of the Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031 (2020) and Policies T1, T2, T3 and T4 of the London Plan (2021) which aim to ensure that new advertisements do not have an adverse effect on public or highway safety, including when considering cumulative impacts. As I have concluded that there would be no harm to public or highway safety, there would be no conflict with the relevant elements of these policies.

Conditions

26. The 5 standard conditions set out in the Regulations apply to all advertisements consented in England. It is not necessary for me to repeat these conditions on this decision. However, the appellant should ensure they are familiar with these conditions.
27. Given there may be some delay in the display of the advertisement while scaffolding and building renovation works are prepared, a condition is required to clarify that the consent will begin on the first date of the display of the advertisement or by not later than 6 months from the date of this decision, whichever is sooner, in accordance with Regulation 14(8) of the Regulations. A condition is also required to ensure the appellant notifies the Council of the first date of the display of the advertisement, for clarity.
28. As the advertising display would be a printed image with fixed lighting, a condition to prevent intermittent lighting, animation or moving images is not necessary. A condition to prevent obstruction of the highway during installation and maintenance is not necessary as this is controlled by separate legislation.

Conclusion and Recommendation

29. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be allowed subject to conditions.

M Jones

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

30. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and agree with the reasoning and recommendation. On that basis the appeal is allowed subject to the conditions listed above.

L McKay

INSPECTOR