



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 4 September 2025

By SJ Desai BSc MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/J2210/Z/25/3363780

186 Wincheap, Canterbury CT1 3RY

- The appeal is made under 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 Wildstone Estates Limited against the decision of Canterbury City Council.
 - The application Ref is CA/24/02290.
 - The proposed advertisement is Erection of 1x D-Poster Advertisement.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended) and paragraph 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (the Framework) state that advertisements should be subject to control in the interests of amenity and public safety. In this case, the Council has raised no issue regarding public safety, and I have found no reason to disagree.
3. In accordance with the Regulations, I have taken into account the provisions of the development plan only in so far as they are material.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed advertisement on the amenity of the area.

Reasons

5. The advertisement would be located adjacent to the flank elevation of 190 Wincheap (No.190) and within the wider forecourt of an established petrol filling station (PFS) located on the northern side of one of the principal approaches into the town centre. The surrounding environment is generally characterised by traditional buildings of mixed character, largely comprising commercial premises at ground floor with residential use above. A grouping of designated heritage assets, the Grade II 160-164 Wincheap (No.160-164), are located directly to the east of the PFS.
6. The appeal site lies within the Canterbury City Conservation Area (CCCA). In accordance with Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act), I am required to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas. I

have also had regard to the potential impact of the proposal on nearby designated heritage assets.

7. With reference to the Canterbury Conservation Area Appraisal (2023), the special interest of the CCCA is drawn from the concentration of historic buildings, the legibility of its historic linear street pattern, and the quality of its townscape. Together, these elements provide the area with considerable architectural, cultural and historic value. Within this sensitive context, the advertisement would occupy a visually prominent position.
8. While signage and advertising are not uncommon along Wincheap, they are generally modest in scale, traditional in form and low in position, relating directly to individual commercial premises. There is, however, a notable absence of large-scale, elevated, and internally illuminated displays of the type proposed in this immediate section of the CCCA.
9. While advertisements and related structures are present as part of the PFS these are, with the exception of the modest signage to be replaced by the appeal proposal and which is not considered to contribute to visual clutter, set back away from the highway and due to the alignment of the road do not significantly intrude into the streetscape, particularly when viewed in a westerly direction.
10. The proposed advertisement would measure 6m by 3m and be positioned 2m above ground level. By reason of its prominent position, substantial scale and elevated siting, it would form a conspicuous and visually dominant feature. Rather than integrating with its surroundings, when viewed from a westerly direction in short and long views, it would jar with the prevailing character and rhythm of the streetscape. Its visual impact, even when having regard to lighting associated with the PFS, would be amplified during hours of darkness, when the internally illuminated screen would appear especially intrusive.
11. While the Canterbury Conservation Area Management Plan (2023) identifies the PFS site itself as an 'Area of Opportunity for Enhancement' this does not justify development that further erodes the wider area's historic qualities and character. Similarly, the adjacent site No.190 having an allocation within the Canterbury District Local Plan (2017) (CDLP) for mixed-use development, which appears to have been now built out, does not provide justification for harmful development at the appeal site.
12. Furthermore, the advertisement would be more prominent than the PFS particularly from the east and would dominate, compete with, and detract from the refined architectural composition of the adjacent Grade II No.160–164. The proposal would diminish their special architectural and historic interest, thereby eroding their setting and contribution to the wider significance of the CCCA.
13. Accordingly, the advertisement would be visually intrusive, overbearing, and incongruous within this sensitive context. It would fail to respect, preserve, or enhance the character and appearance of the CCCA and would harm the setting and significance of nearby designated heritage assets.
14. The digital illumination of the advertisement could be regulated through ambient light sensors and conditions consistent with industry standards. However, this would not negate the significant harm arising from the advertisement's physical presence.

15. The Planning Practice Guidance¹ states that in assessing amenity, if the locality where the advertisement is to be displayed has important scenic, historic, architectural or cultural features, whether the proposal is in scale and in keeping with these features is a consideration. For the reasons given above, I find that the site is not suitable for the proposed advertisement due to the effects on the historic environment.
16. I am referred by the appellant to two examples of advertisements within the wider area and four examples nationwide. However, based on the information before me, none of these other sites are located in the CCCA. Furthermore, each case depends on its specific context, and the size, siting, and heritage setting here are key considerations. Without full details of those other cases, no direct comparison can be made. In any case, I have assessed this appeal on its own merits, and the presence of other advertisements elsewhere does not justify the harm to amenity at this site.
17. For the reasons given, I conclude that the proposal would harm the amenity of the area. Having due regard to my duty under the Act, I find that the proposal would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CCCA and would be harmful to the significance and setting of the designated heritage assets identified above. As far as it is material, it would also conflict with Policies DBE3, HE1, HE4, HE6 and HE9 of the CDLP, which collectively seek to ensure that developments positively contribute to the character and context of the area and avoids harm to heritage assets. The proposal would, as far as it is material, also conflict with the Framework which cautions that the quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed.

Other Matters

18. The appellant refers to a number of benefits, including improved site maintenance, increased business rates, the ability to broadcast public messages, and the upgrading of advertising stock. However, the Regulations make clear that advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety. Any benefit to amenity would be modest and would not outweigh the harm identified. This consideration does not alter my findings on the main issue above.

Conclusion

19. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

SJ Desai
INSPECTOR

¹ Paragraph: 079 Reference ID: 18b-079-20140306