
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 July 2025 by E Nutman BA (Hons)

Decision by E Grierson BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 6 October 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/Z4310/Z/25/3363907

Clayton Square Shopping Centre Cases Street Entrance, Great Charlotte Street, Liverpool L1 1QR

- 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 London Lites Ltd against the decision of Liverpool City Council.
 - The application Ref is 25A/0028.
 - The advertisements proposed are described as 'Replacement of existing Clayton Square Advertising Sign with an LED Full Motion Digital Advertisement Display'.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

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.

Main Issue

3. The Council does not object to the siting of the advertisement on public safety grounds and I see no reason to disagree. Therefore, the main issue is the effect of the proposal on visual amenity and linked to this its effect on the setting of the surrounding heritage assets.

Reasons for the Recommendation

4. The entrance to Clayton Square Shopping Centre, accessed via Cases Street, is surrounded by multiple mid-19th century Grade II listed buildings: No.'s 19, 21 & 23 Ranelagh Street, Central Hotel and Midland Hotel. These buildings showcase the interesting variety of architecture, such as the Italianate style, seen during this period. The Cases Street entrance is formed from a narrow, metal arch framework and glass. The advertisement currently in place is an orange square sign that reads 'Clayton Square' in white lettering. The surrounding character is somewhat busy due to the appeal site's inner-city location, and the variety of commercial shops and bars surrounding it. This results in a variety of signage to building frontages; however, these are all modest and static. I observed from my site visit that whilst there was a presence of spotlights, there was an absence of illuminated signs within the surrounding area.
5. Whilst the appeal building is located within a busy retail area, the existing sign fits comfortably within the dimensions of the arch façade and is simple and static,

reflecting the signage seen to neighbouring buildings. The glass arch structure mimics the style of a 19th Century glasshouse, reflecting the high-quality design of the listed buildings that surround it. The replacement shopping centre signage would have a horizontal orientation which would be unsympathetic to the narrow and tall composition of the structure and would partially obscure some of the framework of the arch. The significant dimensions of the LED display, together with its luminance, would dominate the façade of the arch and would consequently detract from the setting of surrounding heritage assets and the visual amenity within this area of Cases Street.

6. Whilst many buildings, including the listed buildings which front onto Ranelagh Street, can be seen with signs to their frontages, these are sympathetic to the listed buildings and their settings. I also acknowledged that the appeal statement refers to the shroud advertising covering the Midland Hotel, however at the time of my site visit this was no longer in place, highlighting its temporary nature, which differs from the permanence of the appeal proposal. The proposed advertisements would sit centrally between the buildings that flank Cases Street. The proposed advertisement would therefore be highly visible and would not preserve the setting of the surrounding listed buildings and are therefore unacceptable in terms of visual amenity.
7. I note that reference has been made to smaller illuminated advertisements, however, no specific information or details have been provided in relation to these. Nevertheless, these, together with the examples of larger, illuminated displays shown at 1-5 Church Street and on the façade of St Johns Shopping Centre, relate to different areas and therefore do not form part of or contribute to the character seen within the area directly surrounding Cases Street. Therefore, they do not justify the site-specific harm caused to the visual amenity and heritage assets in this instance.
8. To conclude, the advertisement would cause unacceptable harm to the visual amenity of the area and, insofar as it is material, would conflict with Policy UD9 of the Liverpool Local Plan (2022). However, whilst I have taken them into account as material considerations, the 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 are not, in themselves, decisive. The proposal is also contrary to paragraph 141 of the NPPF which states that advertisements should be subject to control in the interests of amenity where there is potential for the quality and character of places to suffer as a result of cumulative impacts.

Other Matters

9. I note that the appellant has suggested that luminance levels and frequency of advertisement change could be controlled by condition, and that the display restricts the level of luminance displayed at night, requiring it to be turned off between midnight and 6am. Whilst I have taken this into account, the display would continue to be a prominent feature and would therefore not overcome the issues addressed above.
10. Whilst advertisements are important to the commercial life of the area and the appellant has outlined that the advertisement displays in commercial areas can contribute to a lively, vibrant, modern and successful economic area helping to

support retail activity, I do not consider that the benefits provided by the proposal would outweigh the harm caused to visual amenity and the setting of the aforementioned heritage assets.

Conclusion and Recommendation

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

E Nutman

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

12. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

E Grierson

INSPECTOR