



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 July 2025 by E Clifford BA (Hons) MA

Decision by M Russell BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14th October 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/B4215/Z/25/3367880

Land and buildings on the south side of Ashton Old Road, Ardwick, Manchester M12 6LP

(Easting (x) 385954 Northing (y) 397608)

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended) (the Regulations) against a refusal to grant express consent.
 - The appeal is made by Wildstone Estates Limited against the decision of Manchester City Council.
 - The application ref is 142466/AOH/2025.
 - The advertisement proposed was originally described as 'Erection of two D48 illuminated advertising displays'.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and express consent is granted for the installation of 2 no. internally illuminated 48-sheet 'D-Poster' advertisement hoardings at land on the south side of Ashton Old Road, Ardwick, Manchester (Easting (x) 385954 Northing (y) 397608) in accordance with the terms of the application, ref 142466/AOH/2025. The consent is for five years from the date of this decision and is subject to the five standard conditions set out in Schedule 2 of the Regulations and the following additional conditions: -
 - 1) The maximum luminance level of the advertisements displayed on the panel shall not exceed 300cd/m² during non-daylight hours / inclement weather.
 - 2) The display shall be fitted with a light sensor, which shall adjust the illumination levels to reflect changes in ambient light levels.
 - 3) The advertising display shall contain no moving images, animation, video or full motion images, or any images that resemble road signs or traffic signals.
 - 4) The minimum display time for any advertisement shall be 10 seconds and the change between advertisements shall be instantaneous.
 - 5) The advertising display shall have a default mechanism to display a black screen in the event of any malfunction.

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.

Procedural Matters

3. I have used the description of the proposal from the Council's decision notice and the appeal form in the appeal decision as this is clearer than the description on the application form.
4. The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended) set out that powers under those Regulations shall be exercised 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. Therefore, whilst the development plan policies referred to in the Council's decision cannot by themselves be decisive, where relevant I have taken them into account as a material consideration.

Main Issue

5. The main issue is the effect of the proposed advertisement on visual amenity.

Reasons for the Recommendation

6. The appeal site is located on Ashton Old Road, near to the junction with Midland Street. It is adjacent to a car washing facility. Ashton Old Road is a well-trafficked arterial route into Manchester city centre. Commercial uses line this section of the route and there are a mix of large industrial units and smaller commercial buildings, with uses including a car dealership and a self-storage facility in the immediate vicinity of the site along with their associated fascia and totem signage. Owing to the function of the road and the commercial nature of the surroundings, there are also several large-scale signs in the locality including static and digital advertisements. There are also large traffic information displays and directional signage close by on the Ashton Old Road.
7. The straight road offers views of the city centre skyline in one direction, and in the other the view is shortened and framed by a traditional railway bridge. Despite its commercial characterisation, the stretch of road also has verdancy with mature trees and shrubbery often interspersed between the buildings and opposite the appeal site a grass verge. Indeed, there is an abundance of greenery softening the backdrop to the appeal site as one travels towards the city centre.
8. Due to its large scale, elevated position next to the highway and dual-sided design, the advertisement would be prominent on the straight approach to the site for those travelling along Ashton Old Road in either direction. Even so, the highway is wide at this point. Thus, it has an open and spacious feel and in this context the sign would not appear overly dominant. As it is positioned in front of a cluster of significant greenery, it would sit comfortably against this backdrop and would not appear conspicuous or cluttered within the prevailing commercial context of the surroundings.
9. Moreover, as the road is already well-lit, and conditions could be attached in line with the indicated limits to the frequency in which images would change and to the levels of illumination, these factors would further ensure suitable assimilation of the proposal at this location.
10. Consequently, taking all the above into consideration, the proposed advertisement would have an acceptable effect on the visual amenity of the area.

11. The Council has drawn my attention to policies EN1, SP1 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy (2012) and saved policies E3.3, DC15.1 and DC15.2 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester (1995) which collectively seek good design and to ensure any proposals have regard to the character, appearance and amenity of the area. Whilst they have not in themselves been decisive, I have taken these policies into account as a material consideration. Given my finding that the proposal would have acceptable effects on the amenity of the area it would also generally accord with the requirements of these policies.

Conditions

12. The Council have suggested conditions relating to the control of illumination, moving images, and the frequency of display changes. These are also similar to some of the conditions relating to 'digital consents' appended to the appellant's statement of case. In the interests of public safety and visual amenity, I consider such conditions to be necessary.

Conclusion and Recommendation

13. For the reasons given above the appeal should be allowed.

E Clifford

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

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

M Russell

INSPECTOR