



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 October 2025

by **K Mansell BA (Hons) MPhil TP MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 03 November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/P4225/Z/25/3373102

Land South of No 2 Bridge Street, Halifax Road, Rochdale OL12 9AA

- 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 Wildstone Estates Limited against the decision of Rochdale Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/00567/ADV.
 - The advertisement proposed is replacement of paper and paste advertisement display board with digital advertisement display board.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The site address on the application form is different from that included on the appeal form. I am satisfied that the latter provides a more accurate location and I have therefore used it as the address in the banner heading above.
3. The Regulations¹ and the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) state that advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety. The effect of the proposal on public safety is not a matter raised as a concern by the Council, and from the evidence before me and my observations on site, I have no reason to disagree. Furthermore, in its decision notice, the Council identify that the proposal fails to accord with policy P3 of the Rochdale Adopted Core Strategy (2016) (RCS) and policy JP-P1 of the Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document (2024) (PEJDPD). I have taken these policies into account as a material consideration in so far as they are relevant to amenity.

Main Issue

4. The main issue in this appeal is the effect of the advertisement on the amenity of the area.

Reasons

5. The appeal site is part of a linear verge behind a bus lay-by at the end of Bridge Street, at its junction with the A58 Halifax Road, a strategic route connecting Rochdale to Littleborough. From my site visit, I observed that the A58 is a relatively busy thoroughfare, contributing to the reasonably urban character of the locality. Whilst there are some commercial uses within the vicinity of the site, the

¹ The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007

- surrounding area is largely residential. It is of varied architectural form but with a prevalence of two storey development. This includes the adjacent end-terrace property at 2 Bridge Street, which presents a flank elevation to the site.
6. There are presently 2 freestanding 3m x 6m (48-sheet format) 'paper and paste' advertisement panels on the appeal site. These are modestly elevated above ground level and mounted on a 'V' shaped timber structure, positioned either side of a tree. One panel faces eastbound traffic on Halifax Road, whilst the other is directed more towards westbound vehicles. The appeal scheme would replace both panels with a single 3m x 6m LCD digital (D48) advertisement display. This would be sited on a more linear alignment to the existing adverts, facing towards westbound road users. It would be capable of displaying static advertisements on rotation, with illumination controlled to respond to the context and advertisement content. Its brightness would also be decreased during the hours of darkness.
 7. My attention has been drawn to an extant advertisement consent at the appeal site for 1 internally illuminated digital display² to replace the 2 existing hoardings. This approved display would be installed at approximately 1.65m above ground level, and of a comparable scale to the existing panels. In contrast, the appeal proposal would raise the display to be sited approximately 3m above ground level. Whilst the increase in height would be modest, the greater overall scale would make the advertisement appreciably more prominent within the street scene, particularly in relation to No 2 Bridge Street. Even if it would remain below the ridge line of No 2, it would align broadly with the eaves level and appear more visually dominant than the previously approved scheme, which would extend closer to the midpoint of the first-floor windows. Accordingly, it would be unsympathetic to the scale of the adjacent built form and an unduly prominent feature in the street scene.
 8. I recognise that the appeal site is not in a conservation area nor within proximity to any listed buildings or other heritage assets, and the appeal scheme would also be lower than the adjacent tree. Nevertheless, the siting and alignment of the proposed advertisement would be such that it would be visible to those travelling westbound on the A58. Its scale and proximity to the pavement would also mean that the display and illuminated changing imagery would draw the eye of passers-by and it would be dominant in close range views for westbound pedestrians and those waiting at the adjacent bus stop in particular. Even if it would have a negligible effect on the living conditions of adjoining residential occupiers, as a result of its scale and form, it would be an obtrusive feature within the street scene. The imposition of conditions to control matters including levels of illuminance and the rate of change between the advertisements would not overcome this harm.
 9. On my site visit, I observed a similar D48 display installed in close proximity to the appeal site, adjacent to 463 Halifax Road, which extended slightly above the eaves of the adjoining property. However, I have not been provided with full details of this advertisement consent nor its history. Consequently, even if it was also assessed against policy P3 of the RCS (2016) insofar as it relates to amenity, I cannot be certain as to the detailed considerations that applied in that case. In any event, I am required to reach conclusions based on the individual circumstances of this appeal.
 10. For the reasons given above, I find that the proposal would be harmful to the visual amenity of the area. I have taken into account policy P3 of the RCS (2016) and

² Local Planning Authority Reference: 24/00513/ADV

policy JP-P1 of the PEJDPD (2024). In broad terms, these policies seek, amongst other matters, to secure high standards of design and enhance the borough's identity and ensure that schemes have regard to the character of the locality. These policies are material in so far as they relate to amenity. Given that I have concluded that the proposal would harm amenity, it therefore conflicts with these policies. For the same reasons, it would conflict with guidance within relevant sections of the Framework, insofar as they relate to amenity.

Other Matters

11. The appellant has drawn my attention to a condition on the previously approved extant advertisement consent. However, whether a condition attached to that earlier consent is in line with the Institute of Lighting Professionals' guidance is not a matter before me as part of this appeal.
12. I have had regard to the benefits of digital advertising put forward by the appellant. This includes the durability and efficiency of LCD digital technology, as well as the decluttering of advertisement sites as traditional hoardings are replaced with a modern digital format, leading to an overall reduction in advertising space. However, I have not been provided with any substantive evidence of particular economic, social or environmental benefits arising from this rationalisation in the volume of advertising panels, and I afford it limited weight as a result. Such benefits do not, therefore, outweigh the harm identified under the main issue.

Conclusion

13. For the reasons set out above, I conclude that the advertisement would be harmful to amenity. Whilst the development plan policies are not determinative, the proposal conflicts with policy P3 of the RCS (2016) and policy JP-P1 of the PEJDPD (2024) insofar as they are relevant to amenity considerations, and also to the Framework in that respect. Accordingly, the appeal should be dismissed.

K. Mansell

INSPECTOR