
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 November 2025

by Gary Deane BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 18 November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/L3245/Z/25/3373445

1a-1b Cheapside, Shifnal, Shropshire TF11 8BN

- 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 Mr Richard Carless against the decision of Shropshire Council.
 - The application reference is 25/02296/ADV.
 - The advertisement proposed is described as the advertisements displayed will be mainly local businesses in addition to local charities and community groups, schools, the church, and other events. All advertisements used will be purely content from local businesses who are signed up with our business: Visit Shifnal, which promotes and raises awareness for local businesses, community groups, charities.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposed advertisement on amenity, including the Shifnal Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

3. The appeal property forms part of a detached 3-storey building with a ground floor shop that occupies a prominent corner position within Shifnal town centre. The area has a mixed commercial character and contains a variety of advertisement displays. The site also falls within the CA, which encompasses the historic core of the town.
4. Although not listed, the appeal building has an attractive Georgian character, with large multi-pane windows and a well-proportioned traditional style, timber shopfront facing Cheapside. When viewed from surrounding streets, No 1a–1b forms part of the historic streetscape. It contributes positively to the visual quality of the local area and to the character and appearance of the CA.
5. The proposal is to replace an existing static information board set within a brick infill panel of the shopfront with an internally illuminated digital advertising screen. The display would be modest in size, with a slim profile, glass front, black finish and automatic dimming controls. A timber frame could also be incorporated.
6. Although the number of advertisements at the property would not increase, the proposal would introduce a distinctly modern and visually conspicuous feature into a shopfront characterised by traditional materials and restrained, static signage. Although similar in scale to the board that is to be replaced, the combination of

internal illumination and changing digital content would result in a markedly greater visual presence. Its tablet-style form, the illumination and the movement of the display would relate uneasily alongside the unlit white lettering and numbers that are applied on the main fascia and stallrisers.

7. In my judgement, the luminosity and changing nature of the display would draw undue attention, particularly after dark, appearing visually dominant and discordant within the traditional frontage. As a result, the proposal would cause harm to visual amenity and the character and appearance of the CA would not be preserved.
8. I acknowledge the appellant's reference to modern commercial signage elsewhere in the town centre and the intention to upgrade the existing board. I agree that digital advertising is becoming more common within urban areas. However, the CA retains a predominantly traditional appearance, with signage of generally modest impact. The presence of more modern frontages in other parts of the CA does not justify the introduction of an illuminated, changing digital display in this prominent location. Although the materials and finish would be of good quality, the issue here is the incompatibility of the illuminated changing display with its historic context.
9. The harm identified would be localised and, in terms of the National Planning Policy Framework, would amount to less than substantial harm to the significance of the CA. Such harm must be weighed against any public benefits. I recognise the strong community and business support for the proposal, including many signatories to the petition, and the desire to promote local trade and enhance vitality, which align with wider policy aims. However, these public benefits do not outweigh the harm that would be caused to the CA.
10. I have had regard to the various planning policies and guidance cited. However, powers under the Regulations may only be exercised in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of any material considerations. Accordingly, the policies and guidance have not been determinative in reaching my decision.
11. The Council raises no concerns regarding public safety. Based on the submitted evidence, I have no reason to take a different view. Nevertheless, for the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Gary Deane

INSPECTOR