



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 November 2025

by **David Wyborn BSc(Hons) MPhil MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/A5840/Z/24/3341298

Town Hall Chambers, 32 Borough High Street, London SE1 1XU

- 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 Justin Myers of Blow Up Media Uk Ltd against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Southwark.
 - The application Ref is 24/AP/0148.
 - The advertisement proposed is a temporary decorative printed scaffold shroud advertisement measuring 11.8 x 6.6 metres inset within a 1:1 image of the building facade depicted across the whole of the scaffolding.
 - This decision supersedes that issued on 26 September 2024. That decision on the appeal was quashed by order of the High Court.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and express consent is granted for the display of a temporary decorative printed scaffold shroud advertisement measuring 11.8 x 6.6 metres inset within a 1:1 image of the building facade depicted across the whole of the scaffolding at Town Hall Chambers, 32 Borough High Street, London SE1 1XU in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 24/AP/0148. The consent is subject to the five standard conditions set out in Schedule 2 of the 2007 Regulations and the following additional condition:
 - 1) The express consent hereby granted shall be for a period of 6 months and shall begin on the date of the commencement of the display or 6 months from the date of this decision whichever is the earlier.

Preliminary Matters and Background

2. This appeal is a redetermination of the earlier quashed decision. That decision has no legal effect. I am not bound by any of the findings of the quashed decision and I have started afresh in my considerations. However, I have noted the findings of that Inspector in respect of those aspects which were not the subject of the reasons for quashing the decision. I am also aware of the two previous dismissed appeal decisions regarding shroud advertisements to this property, the first in February 2021¹ and the second in August 2024². I have taken these decisions into account as part of my considerations.
3. The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (the 2007 Regulations) and the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) both explain that advertisements should be subject to

¹ APP/A5840/Z/20/3251554

² APP/A5840/Z/24/3336208

control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking into account cumulative impacts. When considering these two issues, the provisions of the development plan can be taken into account, so far as they are material.

Main Issue

4. The Council has raised no issue in respect of public safety and, having assessed the proposal at my site visit, I have found no reason to disagree. The main issue is, therefore, the effect of the advertisement display on the amenity of the area, in particular on the Borough High Street Conservation Area (the Conservation Area) and listed buildings.

Reasons

5. Town Hall Chambers (32 and 34 Borough High Street) is a grade II listed building and sits on an island site within the busy Borough High Street. It dates from 1862 and was designed by Frederic Chancellor in an Italianate style. It is a prominent building with four main floors and an attic. When viewed from the south, the building acts as a focal point within this street scene. The yellow stock brick with ornate and highly decorative Portland stone dressings under a slate roof combine to produce an impressive historic structure that makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of this section of Borough High Street.
6. The site is located within the Conservation Area. The significance of the Conservation Area includes the pattern of the medieval street frontages, with generally tall, narrow properties, possessing good examples of Georgian through to early 20th century commercial architecture. The majority of buildings in the Conservation Area that define its character are 18th and 19th century buildings and follow Classical design principles. Whilst advertising is a common and prominent feature in the Conservation Area, existing advertisements tend to be positioned at fascia level above the ground floor windows and shop fronts. Advertising signage above this level is rare.
7. As the site and proposed advertisement are located within a conservation area there is the duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of any land or buildings in a conservation area³.
8. There is a small section of public space directly outside the southern façade of the building. The listed St Saviour's Southwark War Memorial occupies part of that area. There are other listed buildings nearby.
9. The 2007 Regulations explain that factors relevant to amenity include the general characteristics of the locality, including the presence of any feature of historic, architectural, cultural or similar interest. Consequently, the presence of listed buildings, and the impact of the scheme upon them, is an important consideration.
10. It is explained that the building is in need of renovation, including to the façades, and the works will require the addition of full height scaffolding to the elevations. Instead of the probable addition of safety netting to the outside of the scaffolding it is proposed to install a wrap-around shroud. The shroud would depict the external appearance of the building, albeit that on the eastern elevation a rectangular area, 11.8m by 6.6m, would provide a space for a commercial advertisement. The

³ Section 72(1) of The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

submission explains that the advertising is proposed to be included on a section of the shroud as a means to help fund the project, including the provision of the shroud itself.

11. Maintaining Town Hall Chambers in a good state of repair would help to conserve the significance of this important and prominent listed building within the Conservation Area. However, to undertake the renovations requires scaffolding to the external elevations and the indications are that this scaffolding would be required for some months. During that period the scaffolding, in all likelihood with safety netting to the outer side, would be visually discordant and appear as an unduly functional feature. This temporary scaffolding would harm the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and obscure views of the listed building itself.
12. The shroud would cover the exterior of the scaffolding and depict the elevations of the building. It would provide a more pleasing and interesting sight than the scaffolding on its own during the temporary period that the scaffolding was in place. The commercial advertisement, to the eastern elevation, would be clearly visible within that part of the adjoining street, but not especially prominent in mid and longer distance views. Also, because the advertisement would be surrounded to the sides and above by the depiction of the building, the size and position of the advertisement would not be disproportionate, nor appear unduly out of character with the shroud as a whole along this fairly lengthy elevation. This advertisement attached to the shroud, while some way up the side of the building, would not be harmful on the basis of a temporary period and within this busy, vibrant area which has a dense cover of commercial buildings in this section of the Borough High Street.
13. Consequently, while the shroud would obscure the listed building, so would the scaffolding. However, the shroud would provide some understanding of the appearance of the façades of Town Hall Chambers behind it, even with the advertisement. Taken in the round from a heritage perspective, I find that the shroud with advertisement is preferable and acceptable to the alternative of the visual appearance of the scaffolding during the temporary, renovation period. I therefore find that the appeal proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area during this temporary period.
14. I do not consider that the setting or significance of the St Saviour's Southwark War Memorial, or any of the other nearby listed buildings I noted at my site visit, would be adversely affected by the appeal proposal, especially on the basis that the shroud with its advertisement is for a temporary period while renovations take place.
15. The Planning Practice Guidance advises that buildings which are being renovated or are undergoing major structural work and which have scaffolding or netting around them may be considered suitable as temporary sites for shroud advertisements or large 'wrap' advertisements covering the face, or part of the face, of the building. Given my findings on the lack of heritage and other visual harm the site would be suitable for such a wrap-around advertisement in the way proposed.
16. There have been two appeals dismissed for shrouds that incorporated an advertisement to this building. Both of these proposals involved the addition of the

advertisement to the narrow, southern elevation of the building. This is a much more prominent façade which is seen in longer distance views. Furthermore, the proposed advertisements would have taken up a significant proportion of that southern elevation and would have had a substantial impact within the street scene. This scheme differs from those dismissed appeals because the advertisement is to the eastern side, would be surrounded by a much larger area of the shroud, and views of the proposed advertisement would often be more oblique such that the impact would not be unduly prominent within the street scene. The present appeal scheme is a materially different proposal to those which have been dismissed and I have considered it on its merits. My findings on the visual aspects of the proposal are consistent with those of the Inspector in the quashed decision.

17. I conclude, on the basis of a temporary period and as an alternative to the scaffolding that would be required to assist the renovation work, that the shroud with advertisement would not harm the amenity of the area, would preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and would not harm the setting of nearby listed buildings. In this regard the scheme would comply with Policies P19 and P20 of The Southwark Plan 2022, Policy HC1 of the London Plan 2021 and the Framework which, amongst other things, set out the policy approach to heritage conservation.

Conditions

18. The appellant has explained that the actual date of the host scaffolding may be delayed pending this decision and so it is requested that the start date for any consent could be left flexible as a delayed host scaffold could erode the short period of any temporary consent granted for the shroud. The Advertisement Regulations allow for this approach rather than the consent period having to commence on the day of the actual consent.
19. The appellant has suggested a wording of a condition to reflect this temporary, but flexible period, and this broadly reflects the options in the 2007 Regulations. A temporary 6 month period would be appropriate, as while the shroud with advertisement is better than the appearance of the scaffolding alone, the sooner the building would revert back to its unadorned appearance with the external elevations of this listed building revealed, the better. The condition would achieve this aim of restricting the display to 6 months and with a flexible but sensible period in which the scheme could be commenced.
20. Additionally, as with all advertisement consents, the approval would be subject to the standard 5 conditions and I have referenced this in the decision.

Conclusion

21. For the above reasons, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

David Wyborn

INSPECTOR