



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 November 2025

by Mr C J Tivey BSc (Hons) BPI MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 28 November 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/X5990/Z/25/3374947

4 Oxford Street, London W1T 1BB

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning Act (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 against a refusal to grant express consent.
 - The appeal is made by Infinity Outdoor Ltd against the decision of Westminster City Council.
 - The application Ref. 25/04510/ADV.
 - The advertisement proposed is described as the temporary display of an externally illuminated scaffold banner advertisement measuring 17m x 4.5m (landscape) fixed to the Tottenham Court Road elevation, for a period of 12 months.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed, and consent is granted for the temporary display of an externally illuminated scaffold banner advertisement measuring 17m x 4.5m (landscape) fixed to the Tottenham Court Road elevation, for a period of 12 months at 4 Oxford Street, London W1T 1BB. The consent is for twelve months from the date of this decision and is subject to the five standard conditions set out in the Regulations.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the proposal upon visual amenity, including upon the setting of the neighbouring Soho and Bloomsbury Conservation Areas and the Listed Buildings at 1 Tottenham Court Road and 6 Oxford Street, and whether the scheme would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Hanway Street Conservation Area.

Reasons

3. The appeal site is located within the heart of the West End of London and has undergone quite substantial changes in recent years since my predecessors dealt with appeals APP/X5990/Z/17/3185156, APP/X5990/Z/16/3165642 and APP/X5990/H/16/3143311. The changes also include the installation of a number of large digital advertisements, including on the Dominion Theatre, which gives the locality a vibrant feel.
 4. From a heritage perspective the site is in a highly sensitive location, but as can be seen by the Outernet development for example, it is quite clear that change has been deemed to be acceptable and whilst I wholly agree that the appeal site itself can be deemed to be a non-designated heritage asset, it is in dire need of restoration.
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5. The scheme would involve a shroud and externally illuminated advertisement to be fixed to scaffolding, with a programme showing that a period of approximately 12 months would be required for the restoration works to the building, and consequently Advertisement Consent is sought for that period.
6. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) stipulates that buildings which have been renovated or undergoing major structural work 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.
7. The Oxford Street and Tottenham Court Road facing elevations of the shroud would be of a 1:1 outline image of its facade, with a 17m x 4.5m advertisement located at first floor level on the latter elevation.
8. Such scaffolding shrouds are becoming increasingly commonplace, and I consider an effective way of masking what can often be deemed unsightly scaffolding and safety netting which tend to detract from the character and appearance of an area for the duration of building operations. Whilst I consider the permanent siting of an advertisement of the nature proposed would be harmful to both designated and non-designated heritage assets, I consider when combined with the 1:1 image of the building facade, and having regard to the temporary nature of the scheme, that it would preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area as a whole.
9. Ultimately the traditional features of the host building would be renovated, and this would consequently improve the contribution that it makes when viewed in the context of the aforementioned Listed Buildings and other Conservation Areas in the longer term.
10. I conclude that the proposal would not give rise to harm the visual amenities of the area and I find no conflict between the proposal and paragraph 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Whilst not decisive, I have had regard to Policy 43 of the City Plan 2019 – 2040 (April 2021) which requires signs and advertisements to make a positive contribution to amenity; and the Council’s Streets and Spaces Public Realm Guidance Supplementary Planning Document August 2025 with specific regard to its principles on the use of shrouds.

Conclusion and Conditions

11. The Council has suggested a condition be imposed that requires the advertisement to only be displayed until 31st August 2026. However, bearing in mind that the submitted Gantt Chart highlights that the works would take around 12 months, I consider that that would be unreasonable. Therefore, I have imposed a condition within my decision that requires the advertisement to be removed within 12 months of the date of this decision which I consider necessary in the interests of visual amenity.
12. Therefore, having regard to the above and all other matters raised by the Council, I conclude that the appeal should succeed.

C J Tivey

INSPECTOR