
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 7 October 2025 by Elizabeth Davies BSc (Hons) MIEMA, CEnv

Decision by A M Nilsson BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 January 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/Z/25/3373232

Land at Nallhead Road, corner with Country Way TW13 6SS

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 against a refusal to grant express consent.
 - The appeal is made by Fuller Smith and Turner against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref is P/2025/1729.
 - The advertisement proposed is two back-to-back pole mounted digital advertising displays.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

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.

Preliminary Matters

3. In the banner heading above, I have used the address for the advertising displays used by the Council on its decision notice and provided by the appellant in the appeal forms as it describes the location of the proposal more concisely than the address given on the application form.
4. As the appeal relates to a refusal to grant express consent for advertisements, I have had regard to Section 3(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (the Regulations). This limits my considerations to those relating to amenity and public safety. Regard does not need to be had to the development plan. I have taken the relevant policies into account as a material consideration. However, they have not by themselves been determinative in respect of the appeal.
5. It has been noted that the appeal site lies within an Area of Special Advert Control (ASAC).

Main Issues

6. The main issues are the effect of the proposed advertisement on 1) the amenity of the local area, and 2) on public safety as it relates to road users.

Reasons for the Recommendation

Amenity

7. The appeal site is an undeveloped area of land located adjacent to the busy A316 fly over and slip road, close to the Sankey Roundabout. The site itself contains trees and shrubs and although it has a rather overgrown and unkept appearance, the green space does present a pleasant change in scenery next to the highway network. The wider surrounding area has a mixed character, with residential dwellings, fields, sports pitches, horse riding stables and a sewage treatment works all nearby, but it is not a densely built-up area.
8. The proposal is for the construction of one circa 17.3 metre tower displaying two large 'next generation digital' low energy LED illuminated advertisements in a 'V' formation. The advertising panels would display a variety of static images. From my observations, the sign would be visible from the A316, from the roundabout and the A316 slip-road.
9. The advert would be located in a prominent position, highly visible to both road users and pedestrians. The tower and adverts would be very large and dominate the surrounding area. Due to their size and elevated siting, they would appear incongruous and out of keeping, with the overall height of the advertisements being much higher than any of the trees on the appeal site or buildings in the immediate vicinity.
10. The A316 is a major road in the area and the street lighting on the flyover consists of tall columns, but this is necessary highway infrastructure. The presence of illuminated sports pitches near the appeal site is noted, but the pitches are set back from the A316 and although the pitches are lit, the lighting I observed is at a much lower height and directed towards the pitches and clearly related to the sports use. The sewage treatment works cover a large area and serve an essential infrastructure purpose, whilst close to the appeal site, it would be fairly well screened by trees when viewing the advertisements. Whilst the surrounding installations, such as the flyover and sewage works may not be wholly positive features in terms of the character and appearance of the area, this itself does not justify further harm to amenity from the proposal.
11. I appreciate the display may fall within best practice guidance for brightness and transitions are instant. However, the digital illumination would result in a visually incongruous feature that would stand out from lighting associated with other uses in the area and look stark against the backdrop of trees on the appeal site.
12. I noted on my site visit, that the wooden fence that bounds the site is broken in a number of places and on close inspection there is evidence that the site has been used for fly tipping. Should the appeal be allowed, the appellant has suggested the appeal site would be fenced and rubbish removed. Whilst this would be a benefit to the local area and do weigh in favour of the advertisements, the benefits do not outweigh the harm identified.
13. For the above reasons, I conclude that the proposed advertisement would be harmful to amenity. Whilst I have had regard to the appellant's comments that luminance levels can be controlled throughout the day, and the standard conditions, these would not overcome the harm I have identified.

14. Whilst not determinative, I have had regard to the London Borough of Hounslow Local Plan (2015-2030) (the 'Local Plan') Policies CC1, CC2 and CC5 which seek, amongst other things to ensure development including adverts, protects character, amenity and is of a high-quality design. As the adverts harm amenity, the proposal would conflict with these policies.

Public Safety

15. The appellant has referred to guidance published by Transport for London when considering the acceptability of proposals for roadside digital adverts. It is noted that the proposal would be in line with the guidance in terms of illumination levels, message display duration and instant change of image. It is noted that no objections were received from Transport for London or the Council's Highway department.
16. The main audience for the proposed advertisements would be those travelling on the A316 flyover, but it would also be visible to those exiting on the slip road towards Sankey roundabout. This section of the A316 is wide and fairly straight with minimal distractions. The slip road is also straight and long, with a gentle gradient down towards the roundabout with no traffic lights. Whilst I note the Council's concern that drivers frequently change lanes on the slip road, this would be undertaken at low speeds and given the height of the proposed advertisements they would be increasingly out of view to drivers when approaching the roundabout and I do not consider would increase distraction to such an extent that it would constitute a hazard. The height of the advertisement would mean it would feature in the backdrop for vehicles approaching the roundabout from Nallhead Road, other vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists using or crossing the roundabout would remain clearly visible.
17. On this basis, the proposal would not be harmful to public safety. In so far as it is relevant, it would accord with Local Plan Policy EC2 and CC5 which seeks to ensure that adverse impacts on safety and the transport network are avoided.

Other Matters

18. The appellant has drawn my attention to the benefits of the use of digital display technology. They have stated that they offer many practical and sustainable benefits: reduced waste and energy consumption; easy removal and recycling of component parts; and a reduced number of maintenance visits to site. The appellant has also highlighted the economic benefits that advertising can bring. However, advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety. There is no indication in the Regulations, the Framework or Planning Practice Guidance that any other factors can be taken into account either for, or against, a proposal.
19. It is noted that no heritage assets would be harmed as a result of the proposal. However, this is a neutral factor in the appeal.

Conclusion and Recommendation

20. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

Elizabeth Davies

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

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

A M Nilsson

INSPECTOR