



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 19 January 2026

by A Caines BSc (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 22 January 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/U5360/Z/25/3374607

**Pavement o/s Abney Park Court, 230 Stoke Newington High Street,
London N16 7HF**

- 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 Wilson (Clear Channel UK) against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hackney.
 - The application Ref is 2024/2616.
 - The advertisement proposed is described as a “free-standing advertising Council information panel with 2no digital displays, one either side. Display dimensions are H 1635mm x W 924mm. Displays to portray static images that change every 10 seconds”.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The Advertisement Regulations stipulate that control may only be exercised in the interests of ‘amenity’ and ‘public safety’, taking account of any material factors. Factors relevant to ‘amenity’ include the general characteristics of the locality and the presence of any feature of historic, architectural, cultural or similar interest, which encompasses listed buildings and conservation areas.
3. The development plan policies and guidance referred to by the parties are not determinative, but I have taken these into account as a material consideration where relevant to the matters under consideration.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are the effect of the advertisement unit on i) visual amenity, including the setting of nearby heritage assets; and ii) public safety.

Reasons

Amenity

5. The appeal site lies on the east side of Stoke Newington High Street (A10). While the modern shopping frontage of Abney Park Court would provide a robust backdrop for the proposed free-standing advertisement unit, the stretch of pavement where it would be located already contains several elements of street furniture, including street lighting columns, bicycle racks, a road sign and traffic lights. The cumulative effect is a visually busy and cluttered public realm, particularly when bicycles occupy the racks.

6. The introduction of a further solid, visually prominent object into this part of the footway would noticeably increase street-level clutter. This would erode the limited visual relief presently provided between existing items of street furniture.
7. In addition, the unit would be experienced in close succession with other digital advertising installations to the north, including a digital kiosk and a bus-shelter display. This would reinforce a proliferation of conspicuous digital panels, giving the public realm an over-commercialised appearance and contributing to a creeping sense of visual clutter and harm along the street.
8. The site is also adjacent to the Stoke Newington Conservation Area (CA) and directly opposite the Grade II listed entrance lodges, gates and railings of Abney Park Cemetery. These listed entrance features possess architectural and historic significance derived, in part, from their distinctive Egyptian-style design, their association with the cemetery's historic development, and their formalised role as a ceremonial threshold marking the transition from the lively commercial high street to the peaceful, verdant cemetery landscape beyond.
9. The Stoke Newington Conservation Area Appraisal (2004) identifies Stoke Newington High Street as a busy, linear commercial route characterised by continuous terraces, active frontages and a visually complex streetscape. It also highlights the importance of views towards key architectural features, particularly around the entrance to Abney Park Cemetery.
10. Even if I were to agree that the east side of Stoke Newington High Street makes only a low or minor contribution to this significance, the character and perception of the high street are experienced in movement, with long views and changing angles forming an essential part of how its historic elements are appreciated. Despite the physical separation created by the carriageway and the cemetery forecourt, the appeal site nonetheless forms part of how the listed entrance structures and the CA are experienced through dynamic, passing views.
11. Introducing additional clutter and a prominent digital structure into this viewing corridor would increase visual competition, albeit to a limited degree, and reduce the quality of the public realm within which the heritage assets are experienced. In this regard, the proposal would not preserve the setting of either the CA or the listed cemetery entrance structures.
12. The appellant refers to the former presence of a freestanding advertising unit in this location. However, that structure has been removed, and so the baseline for assessment is the current situation in which this section of pavement is open. Little weight can therefore be given to the historic presence of the previous unit.
13. I therefore conclude that the advertisement unit would harm amenity by contributing to clutter in the public realm and by failing to preserve the setting of nearby designated heritage assets.
14. Whilst not decisive, there is conflict with Policy LP7 of the Hackney Local Plan 2020 (HLP), which states that advertisements must not contribute to an unsightly proliferation or clutter of signage in the local area, or adversely affect the significance of historic buildings or areas. There is also conflict with the public realm and historic environment protection objectives of Policies LP1 and LP3 of the HLP, and Policies D8 and HC1 of the London Plan 2021 (LP).

Public safety

15. The advertisement unit would sit within the established street furniture zone and would maintain a sufficiently clear pedestrian route and sightlines, consistent with Transport for London's (TfL) standards for unobstructed footway widths associated with structures of this nature.
16. There is no substantive evidence that it would impede driver visibility at the exit from Cazenove Road or interfere with recognition of traffic signals at the Northwold Road junction to the south. Traffic speeds are relatively low, and both lanes on the southbound approach are left-turn only, limiting the complexity of driver decision-making.
17. In addition, the operation of the digital screens can be controlled through conditions regulating brightness, luminance, transition times and the prohibition of moving images, consistent with recognised best practice. TfL, the highway authority for the A10, did not object to the proposal subject to the imposition of such controls.
18. I therefore conclude that the advertisement unit would not give rise to an unacceptable risk to public safety.
19. Whilst not decisive, there is no conflict with Policies PP1, LP7, LP41 and LP42 of the HLP, or Policy D8 of the LP, insofar as they are relevant to the interests of public safety.

Other Matters

20. The appellant has highlighted various contractual and operational benefits, including modernisation of the advertising estate, provision of community messaging space, and revenue generation. However, these matters do not weigh in favour of the proposal as advertisement decisions are made only in the interests of amenity and public safety. While conditions could regulate illumination to ensure responsible operation, they would not overcome the harm identified to amenity arising from increased clutter and the erosion of heritage asset setting.

Conclusion

21. I have found that the advertisement unit would be detrimental to the interests of amenity. Accordingly, the appeal should be dismissed.

A Caines

INSPECTOR