



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 January 2026

by F Rafiq BSc (Hons) MCD MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29th January 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/A5270/Z/25/3374543

19-21 High Street, London W3 6NG

- 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 Wildstone Estates Limited against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Ealing.
 - The application Ref is 252459ADV.
 - The advertisement proposed is the replacement of existing poster board with one digital advertising screen.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. I have utilised the description of the advertisement proposed from the decision notice as this more accurately describe the proposals subject of this appeal than the description on the application form.
3. The Council's reason for refusal refers to development plan policies. However, the 2007 Regulations require that decisions are made only in the interests of amenity and public safety, as appropriate to each case. Therefore, although I have taken the development plan policies, the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and the National Planning Practice Guidance into account, they have not been decisive considerations in my determination of this appeal.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed advertisement on amenity, having regard to the effect on the Acton Town Conservation Area and the setting of a Grade II* listed building.

Reasons

5. The appeal site currently has an existing poster board advertisement on the gable of a terrace. It is situated within the Acton Town Centre Conservation Area (Conservation Area), which developed from the late 18th Century and contains a mix of Victorian and Edwardian buildings of differing architectural styles. Despite this variation, the predominance of terrace properties which are set close to the highway provides for a tight knit, traditional urban form with a distinctly commercial character owing to the range of retail and other commercial uses that are present.

6. A range of advertisements can be seen along High Street reflecting the mix of uses in the area. These are however generally on properties with a commercial frontage or on street furniture. The larger paper and paste advertisements that have been referenced by the Appellant are also generally at a low level. The proposal however, at second floor level, would be in a significantly elevated position. Whilst the appeal site is an established location for a static advertisement, it currently has a muted, subdued appearance owing to its paper surface, and the static images that are displayed.
7. The proposed digital advertising screen will have a different, noticeably brighter appearance than the existing advertisement, due to its digital illumination and sequentially changing images, despite its size matching the existing poster panels and it having a reduced depth. Although the appellant has referenced controls, such as the ability to decrease brightness in low light conditions and to the speed and frequency of image transitions, the proposal would be more prominent and eye-catching than the existing advertisement on the appeal site. It would stand in contrast to the restrained, static signage which can be seen in the area.
8. The area is well-lit by street lighting, light spill from traffic and from the presence of some illuminated signage. None of these would however be comparable to the size, type and elevated position of the proposal, which would appear visually dominant in a Conservation Area that has a traditional appearance. Although the proposed advertisement would have a sleek, modern form making use of high-quality materials, this does not negate the harm that would arise from an illuminated changing advertisement in a historic context which generally contains static signage of a restrained appearance.
9. There is a Grade II* listed building, the Former Gala Bingo Hall, on the opposite side of High Street. Its significance derives from it being an example of inter-war cinema architecture, which includes distinctive features such as the curved symmetrical facade which gives it prominence in the streetscape. The appeal proposal would be seen in the same views as this Grade II* listed building from certain vantage points along Melville Villas Road. However, the proposal would have a broadly right-angled relationship to the front of this listed building, and together with the separation afforded by the intervening road, this would have a neutral effect on the setting of this heritage asset. The Council has made reference to a locally listed building, The Windmill, but this is situated further away from the appeal site, with only limited intervisibility to the proposal. As such, the proposed advertisement would not have a harmful effect on its setting.
10. The proposed advertisement would face the side elevation of another end-terrace property, No. 23 High Street, but the windows on its upper floors serve bathroom spaces and would not be unduly impacted by the proposal. There are other residential units in the vicinity of the appeal site, including 27A High Street and 19 Gloucester Road, but having regard to the angled relationship with the proposal, I do not consider it would lead to a loss of amenity to the residential occupiers of these properties. Reference has also been made to the existing and proposed flats on the appeal site, and whilst I have not been provided with details of the referenced planning permission¹, given the position of the proposed advertisement, it would not unduly impact on windows to the front and rear of No's 19-21 which are on differing elevations to the proposal, with the existing first floor

¹ LPA Ref: 242413FUL

side facing windows being on the same elevation, but set slightly back from the front of the proposed advertising screen, ensuring that no detrimental impact would arise from light spill.

11. Nevertheless, I conclude that the proposal would have a harmful effect on amenity, having regard to the effect on the Conservation Area. Although not determinative, the proposal would be contrary to Policies D3, D8 and HC1 of The London Plan, Policies 7.4, 7B and 7C of the Ealing Development Management Development Plan Document and the Framework, which state that the quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed.

Other Matters

12. A range of benefits are set out, including environmental benefits associated with the reduction of waste and vehicle trips, societal benefits of being able to utilise the proposal for public and emergency messaging, as well as the investment the proposal would bring and consequential economic benefits. As the powers to control advertisements under the 2007 Regulations may only be exercised in the interests of amenity and public safety, these matters do not fall within the scope of my consideration.
13. Reference has been made to a number of other local advertisements that have been granted consent, but these appear to relate to other forms of advertisements, such as fascia, projecting and totem signs, unlike the proposal which is for the replacement of an existing poster board with a digital advertising screen. The details of a range of other advertisement consents in Conservation Areas have been provided, but these are from different local authority areas and would have been considered on their own circumstances.

Conclusion

14. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

F Rafiq

INSPECTOR