



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 February 2026

by David Reed BSc DipTP DMS MRTPI

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

Decision date: 18 February 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/C1570/Z/25/3374480

Service Station, Start Hill, Great Hallingbury, Bishop's Stortford CM22 7TA

- 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 Wildstone Estates Limited against the decision of Uttlesford District Council.
 - The application Ref UTT/25/1232/AV, dated 1 May 2025, was refused by notice dated 19 August 2025.
 - The advertisement proposed is the erection of an illuminated small format advertising display.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and express consent is granted for an illuminated small format advertising display at the Service Station, Start Hill, Great Hallingbury, Bishop's Stortford CM22 7TA, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref UTT/25/1232/AV, dated 1 May 2025, subject to the five standard conditions set out in the Regulations and the additional conditions set out in the attached schedule.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect of the advertisement display and its illumination on the visual amenity of the area, including the effect on the Grade II listed building The Old Elm.

Reasons

3. The proposal is for a one-sided small format freestanding internally illuminated advertising display, about 928 mm x 1650 mm in size, mounted within a black steel frame structure about 2.4 m tall, 1.2 m wide and 0.2 m thick. The display would be located to one side of the petrol filling station forecourt on the B1256 Start Hill, adjacent to the main pole sign near the western entrance, with the display facing east towards the forecourt and backing onto a tall hedge forming the boundary with the adjacent Accuro care services building.
4. The petrol station lies on the northern side of the B1256 just to the east of the large M11/A120 roundabout opposite a Grade II listed building, The Old Elm, situated on the corner of Tilekiln Green. With an area of low-density housing along the B1256 to the east, the petrol station is the only commercial building in the immediate vicinity. Conspicuous given its large internally illuminated pole sign on the roadside, brightly coloured canopy, forecourt lit up at night and convenience shop, the petrol station comprises an incongruous feature in

the area. However, the roadside facility has been on this site since at least the 1950s and is thus a well-established feature of the street scene.

5. Whilst somewhat larger than the non-illuminated poster currently located on the site, the small format display would be a minor addition when seen within the existing forecourt and its illumination not unreasonable given the current illumination of the petrol filling station at night. The level of illumination would be controlled by condition and a regularly changing display is now a common feature of such advertising and has become widely accepted.
6. Seen from the west the display structure would be screened by the boundary hedge. When approaching from the east the display would be clearly seen on the far side of the forecourt but given the context of the adjacent much larger illuminated pole sign and the garage forecourt as a whole it would not appear intrusive in the street scene and the incremental additional impact would not offend the visual amenity of the area.
7. The display would be seen diagonally across the road from The Old Elm, a timber framed Grade II listed building dating from the 16th century. Whilst within its setting, the petrol filling station already forms a major incongruous feature within the setting of the building and the small format illuminated display would not have any material additional impact compared to the existing situation. The historic and architectural significance of the building and its appreciation/understanding would not therefore be adversely affected by the proposed display.
8. There is no evidence that the display would distract drivers causing a highway safety issue or attract additional visitors to the forecourt.

Conclusion

9. For these reasons, the small format advertisement and its illumination would not adversely affect the visual amenity of the area and would not detract from the significance of the Grade II listed building The Old Elm. The display would comply with Policies GEN2 and ENV2 of the Uttlesford District Local Plan 2005 which seek to ensure development is compatible with the appearance of its surroundings and is in keeping with the surroundings of a listed building, not adversely affecting its setting. The small format display would also comply with the legislative duty to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the setting of the listed building.
10. In addition to the standard conditions set out in the Regulations the appellant has offered to accept eight conditions which are not disputed by the Council. These have been amended slightly for clarity. It is necessary to define the approved plans in the interests of certainty, to control the luminance of the display both day and night in the interests of amenity and to control the content of the display to avoid undue distraction and/or confusion to highway users in the interests of highway safety.
11. Having regard to the above the appeal should be allowed.

David Reed

INSPECTOR

Schedule of Conditions

- 1) The express consent hereby granted expires five years from the date of this decision.
- 2) The development shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved documents for this Advertisement Consent which comprise:
 - Completed application forms
 - Covering letter and Planning Statement
 - Architectural drawings including:
 - 24208/PA/01 Site Location Plan
 - 24208/PA/02 Existing Site Plan
 - 24208/PA/03 Proposed Site Plan
 - 24208/PA/04 Proposed Site Plan
 - 24208/PA/05 Existing and Proposed Elevations
 - 24208/PA/06 Specification
 - 24208/PA/07 CGI
- 3) There shall be no moving images, animation, video or full motion images displayed.
- 4) In the hours of darkness, the advertisement display luminance shall be no greater than 300cd/m² in accordance with the recommended maximum night time luminance value set out for Environmental Zone 4 in Table 10.4 within the Institution of Lighting Professionals - Professional Lighting Guide (PLG 05) 'Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements including Digital Displays' (or its equivalent in a replacement guide).
- 5) In daylight hours, the advertisement display luminance shall be controlled in order to reflect ambient light conditions (to ensure it is not too bright), and shall at all times be no greater than the recommended maximum daytime luminance values set out in Table 10.5 within the Institution of Lighting Professionals – Professional Lighting Guide (PLG 05) 'Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements including Digital Displays' (or its equivalent in a replacement guide).
- 6) The minimum display time for each advertisement shall be 10 seconds and the advertisement shall not include any features which would result in interactive messages/advertisements being displayed.
- 7) The interval between successive advertisements shall be no greater than 1 second and the complete display shall change without effect. The display to include a mechanism to default to a blank or black screen in the event of malfunction, or if the advertisement is not in use.
- 8) No images displayed shall resemble official road traffic signs, traffic lights or traffic matrix signs.