



Appeal Decision

Hearing held on 13 January 2026

Site visit made on 14 January 2026

by Ryan Cowley MPlan (Hons) MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 23 February 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/F5540/H/25/3371898

Hyundai Motor UK, Great West Road, Brentford, London TW8 0LW

- 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 Shaun Goodman, on behalf of Hyundai Motor UK Limited, against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Hounslow.
 - The application Ref is P/2025/1494.
 - The advertisement proposed is installation of an externally illuminated advertisement measuring 27.1m wide by 17.5m high (set within an art deco shroud) on the west elevation of the Alfa Laval Tower between 1st January 2024 and 31st December 2028.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and express consent is granted for installation of an externally illuminated advertisement measuring 27.1m wide by 17.5m high (set within an art deco shroud) on the west elevation of the Alfa Laval Tower between 1st January 2024 and 31st December 2028 at Hyundai Motor UK, Great West Road, Brentford, London TW8 0LW in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref P/2025/1494, dated 9 May 2025. The consent is subject to the five standard conditions set out in Schedule 2 of the 2007 Regulations and the additional conditions in the attached schedule.

Preliminary Matters

2. The advertisement to which the appeal relates had already been installed at the time of my site visit. The appeal is therefore considered retrospectively.
3. The parties have drawn my attention to the policies of the London Borough of Hounslow Local Plan 2015-2030 and the London Plan March 2021 that they consider relevant to this appeal, and I have taken them into account as material considerations. However, powers under the Regulations to control advertisements may be exercised only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking into account the provisions of the development plan, so far as they are material, and any other relevant factors. In my determination of this appeal the Council's policies have not therefore, by themselves, been decisive.
4. The Council is currently undertaking a review of the Local Plan. The emerging Hounslow Local Plan 2020-2041 was submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination on 23 June 2025, with public examination commencing in January 2026. At the hearing, both main parties confirmed that the emerging policies relevant to this appeal remain fundamentally the same as those in the extant Local Plan. The emerging policies are thus not a relevant factor in this case.

5. There are no objections before me from relevant technical consultees with regard to public safety and the parties have agreed in the Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) that the proposal is acceptable in this respect. There is no compelling reason before me to conclude otherwise.

Main Issues

6. The main issue is therefore the effect of the advertisement on amenity, with particular regard to:
 - the character and appearance of the area and the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties; and
 - any other relevant factors, including the condition of the building and its effect on the character and appearance of the area; and the temporary nature of the advertisement and whether the period proposed is justified having regard to the marketing activity and regeneration prospects of the site.

Reasons

Character and appearance of the area and living conditions of neighbours

7. The appeal site comprises a plot of land containing a 13-storey vacant building, formerly known as the “Alfa Laval Tower”. The site is bounded by the Great West Road to the north, and an elevated section of the M4 motorway which stands above it. The building itself sits perpendicular to the motorway, with the appeal advertisement attached to the expansive west facing elevation.
8. The site sits within “character reach C”, described in the Great West Road chapter of the London Borough of Hounslow Urban context and character study 2014. The study identified the dominant use in the area as residential, albeit peppered with a variety of other uses including small footprint retail, community and office buildings. It highlights the surviving c1900 tightly gridded street pattern and its associated 2 storey terraces. The wider Alfa Laval site, including the appeal building, is recognised as being long derelict and a negative influence on the character and appearance of the area.
9. Much of the description of the area in the character study remains accurate today though more recent developments along this stretch of the M4, including several large scale residential and hotel schemes, have increased the scale and enhanced the quality of the built environment in the immediate vicinity of the appeal site. The present-day character and appearance of the area is thus somewhat varied, comprising higher density urban development along the M4 corridor surrounded by low-rise residential suburbs. Based on the evidence and my own observations, advertisements along the M4 have been, and continue to be, relatively common.
10. The appeal advertisement is a prominent addition to the building due to its elevated position and size. This is maintained even after dark by its external illumination. It is readily visible from numerous public vantage points locally, both at ground level from surrounding streets and from the elevated and heavily trafficked M4. It thus has a significant influence on the character and appearance of the area and how it is experienced by passers-by and local residents.
11. While advertisements are not uncommon in the vicinity, in this case the display is disproportionate in size to the appeal building and other examples locally. It thus

dominates the site and surrounding area. It sits in stark contrast to the suburban scale and residential character of the nearby traditional terraced streets and fails to provide an appropriate transition between these areas and the more urban and commercialised plots along the M4. Previous inspectors¹ have found that a permanent advertisement of this scale and nature on the site would not be desirable, and my assessment aligns with that conclusion.

12. With respect to the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties, notwithstanding my assessment above, the advertisement is elevated above the residential building on the opposite side of Brook Lane North, with a considerable separation distance between the two. Though the display is illuminated, the level and duration of the illumination can be adequately controlled by condition. The impact of the advertisement itself on the outlook from these neighbouring properties is thus limited, and not of such significance to cause harm to the living conditions of the occupants.

The condition of the building

13. The appeal building has been unoccupied for almost 3 decades. In that time, its appearance has significantly deteriorated, albeit the decay has been partially screened by various shrouds, scaffolding and advertisements. Parts of the building however now stand unshrouded. The large advertisement and shroud affixed to the east facing elevation was removed several years ago. The narrow side elevations are also now visible. In addition, the podium structure around the lower floors has been demolished, leaving the concrete frame exposed.
14. I saw on site that the building suffers from broken and boarded up windows, graffiti and weathering of the façade. The evidence indicates that those parts of the building behind the shroud are in a similar condition. It is common ground between the main parties that the building in its unshrouded state is more harmful to the character and appearance of the area, and my observations lead me to the same conclusion. This was recognised as far back as 2007 by the Inspector in an earlier appeal² who described the building as clearly an eyesore.
15. The Council recognises that the shrouding of the building mitigates the visual harm to some extent, albeit highlights that there is no technical reason the shroud could not be retained without the advertisement. However, the evidence before me and discussions at the hearing indicate that the revenue from the advertisement funds the shroud and the wider maintenance and management of the appeal site. There is no substantiated evidence that the advertisement provides any meaningful financial net gain for the appellant. It does however ensure the site and shroud can be maintained and does not fall into greater disrepair while vacant.
16. While the appellant company may have the resources to maintain the shroud in isolation should they wish to, there is currently no obligation on them to do so. As above, the east elevation does not feature an advert and remains unshrouded. It is reasonably likely that the shroud will not be maintained or will be removed in the event the appeal is dismissed, and were the building left entirely exposed for any prolonged period of time this would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area.

¹ Appeal Refs APP/F5540/Z/23/3331032 and APP/F5540/H/18/3207953

² Appeal Ref APP/F5540/H/07/1201238

Temporary nature of advertisement

17. Policy CC5 of the Local Plan fundamentally recognises that advertisements may support regeneration objectives in appropriate locations. It encourages the use of temporary shrouds and advertising where these make a positive contribution to the appearance of the area during construction or on-site works. Notably, it does not preclude such schemes in other circumstances.
18. The site has been earmarked for redevelopment for some time. The Brentford Area Action Plan Development Plan Document was adopted in January 2009. This sought a mixed-use development for the former Alfa Laval Site, providing a range of accommodation, with commercial development fronting the Great West Road. This was reflected in the Local Plan allocation from 2015. In 2021, the London Plan identified the wider area as the Great West Road Opportunity Area, with capacity to accommodate new housing, commercial development and infrastructure, while recognising some areas may take 10-15 years to fully mature.
19. Notwithstanding the support for the principle of redevelopment of the site, it remains subject to various constraints. It is previously developed land containing a long derelict large concrete structure requiring either demolition or retrofitting. It sits adjacent to a busy elevated motorway and is bounded by residential development. The site itself is allocated for commercial use and has not been identified as suitable for tall buildings. Proposals must also have regard to the setting of Kew World Heritage Site and other heritage assets. That there is still construction ongoing elsewhere on the wider site is testament to the complexities involved in its regeneration and the length of time taken to realise this.
20. The initial intentions of the appellant were to redevelop the site as a car showroom and flagship headquarters, for which planning permission had been granted in 2016³. The site was acquired by Hyundai Motor UK Ltd in April 2019 for this purpose and the permission lawfully commenced. However, the requirements of the company changed before the full redevelopment could take place. As a global car manufacturer and not a property developer, the preferred option was to sell the site on for redevelopment, and marketing thus began in June 2019.
21. The Council dispute the length of time that the site has been actively marketed. Notably, much of the substantive evidence of marketing before me relates to activity from 2024 onwards. Nevertheless, based on the information that has been provided and discussions at the hearing, it is clear that marketing activity has occurred in some form since 2019, and I recognise that the Covid19 pandemic will have disrupted this activity and its effectiveness to some extent.
22. The marketing exercises have evidently generated a degree of interest in the purchase and redevelopment of the site, albeit primarily for residential use. While this has not resulted in a confirmed buyer and viable redevelopment proposal to date, it remains an active campaign, with a schedule of the most recent interest provided by the appellant. At the time of the hearing, there were 5 parties showing a positive interest in the site, including several pending offers. Overall, I am satisfied there have been, and continues to be, genuine efforts to market the site.
23. I recognise that the advert has already been in place now for a significant number of years. Nevertheless, based on the evidence, there is a realistic prospect that

³ Council Ref 00505/Z/P36

plans for the redevelopment of the site will progress during the temporary period sought. I am thus satisfied that extending the temporary period up until 31 December 2028 is justified given the complexities of the site, its regeneration prospects and the marketing activity to date.

24. Though my position with respect to these matters diverges from the previous appeal decision⁴, the evidence before me and the discussions at the hearing have demonstrated genuine interest in the redevelopment of the building from the appellant and that it is being actively marketed for sale. The circumstances in this case are thus materially different to those before the previous Inspector.

Any other relevant factors

25. Both parties have suggested conditions to secure new shrouding to the exposed eastern elevation of the building in the same style as the existing, and to enhance the site perimeter hoardings as a means of improving the amenity of the site. These measures will enhance the degree of screening provided by the appeal scheme and provide a visual betterment that will compensate for some of the harmful effects associated with the advertisement. These conditions can therefore be appended to the consent in the interests of the amenity of the area.

Conclusion

26. In view of the above assessment, I consider that it would be premature to deny consent for the further retention of the advertisement at this time. There is no compelling reason to believe any alternative improvements would be made to the condition of the building in its absence, nor that this would speed up the process of redevelopment. The removal of the advert and shroud at this time would thus serve no purpose other than to inflict additional harm to the amenity of the area.
27. Accordingly, while I have identified harm to the amenity of the area arising from the appeal advertisement itself, this harm is appreciably less than that which would occur in the event the appeal was dismissed. I consider the additional temporary period sought for the advertisement to be justified based on the site constraints, marketing evidence and the regeneration prospects of the site.
28. For these reasons, I conclude that the effect of the advertisement on amenity is acceptable and the appeal is allowed.

Conditions

29. The main parties agreed a list of conditions in the SoCG should the appeal be successful. Additional conditions were also suggested in their respective appeal statements. I have considered these and amended where appropriate in light of the Planning Practice Guidance and the hearing discussions.
30. The 5 standard conditions set out in the Regulations apply to all advertisements consented in England. It is not necessary for me to repeat these conditions on this decision. However, the appellant should ensure they are familiar with the 5 standard conditions set out in the Regulations.
31. In addition to the standard conditions, and those already referred to above, a condition is required to clarify the expiry date of the temporary consent and to

⁴ Appeal Refs APP/F5540/Z/23/3331032

require removal of the advert before this time. Likewise, conditions are required to limit the level and duration of illumination of the proposed advertisements in the interest of amenity.

32. A condition is also required to ensure the footway, carriageway and cycleway along Great West Road adjacent to the site is not obstructed during installation or maintenance of the advertisement in the interest of public safety. However, recommendations that servicing work be undertaken out of hours where possible are insufficiently precise, and requiring that written permission be secured from Transport for London for the use of cherry picker/ladders from the footway is not necessary as this can be controlled by other means.
33. In the SoCG, a condition was agreed requiring vehicles associated with the advertisement to only park/stop in the area as directed by existing on-street restrictions. However, this is not necessary as this is controlled by other means. Likewise, a condition requiring that no moving, or apparently moving, images are displayed is not required given the nature of the advertisement as a static display attached to a shroud.
34. The Council separately suggested a condition requiring the advertisement be fitted with a light intensity monitor to ensure illuminance levels comply with the maximum recommended lighting intensity. However, it was confirmed by the appellant's lighting consultant at the hearing that this would only be possible for a digital display, and not for a display of the size and nature proposed in this case. This condition is thus not reasonable, and I am satisfied that the aforementioned conditions to limit the level and duration of illumination are sufficient.

Ryan Cowley

INSPECTOR

APPEARANCES

FOR THE APPELLANT:

Shaun Goodman	Head of Legal, Hyundai Motor UK
Nick Tunnell	Business Transformation & Systems Director, Hyundai Motor UK
Ben Read	Director, Black Box Planning
Christiaan Zwart	Counsel, 39 Essex Chambers
Madeleine Begg	Associate, Osborne Clarke LLP
Eunan Scanlon	Technical Director, Stantec

FOR THE COUNCIL:

Jacky Leung	Senior Planning Officer
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SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS

- 1) The advertisement permitted by this consent shall be removed from the site no later than 31 December 2028.
- 2) Within 3 months of the grant of consent, details of a shroud to be installed on the eastern elevation of the building shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for its approval in writing. The shroud shall be of an art deco appearance, consistent with the western elevation shroud. The shroud on the eastern elevation shall thereafter be installed in accordance with the approved details within 3 months of the written approval.
- 3) Within 3 months of the grant of consent, details of enhanced site perimeter hoarding, including artistic printing, shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for its approval in writing. The site hoarding shall thereafter be installed in accordance with the approved details within 3 months of the written approval.
- 4) The advertisement hereby consented shall not exceed a maximum illumination, as measured from the place of the eastern elevation of 42 Brook Lane North of 10 lux (excluding street lighting).
- 5) The illuminated advertisement display hereby consented shall not exceed a luminance of 300cd/m².
- 6) The advertisement hereby granted consent shall be illuminated only between the hours of 16:00 and 23:00 on any day.
- 7) The operation of the footway, carriageway and cycleway along Great West Road must not be impacted during installation or maintenance of the advertisement, shroud or associated work. There must be no encroachment on the clear space needed to provide safe passage for pedestrians and cyclists or obstruction to the flow of traffic along Great West Road.

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