



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 27 April 2026 by Kim Vo MPLAN

Decision by John Morrison BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8 June 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/R0660/Z/26/3378181

6 London Road, Macclesfield SK11 7QX

- 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 Cheshire East Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/0648/ADV.
 - The advertisement proposed is for the erection of a D48 illuminated advertising display.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure, Preliminary Matter and Main Issue

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. I have taken the Council's policies into account as far as they are material to the main issue, since the power to control advertisements may be exercised only in the interests of amenity and public safety. I have no reason to disagree with the Council's findings on the latter. The main issue therefore being the effect of the proposal on amenity, with specific regard to heritage assets.

Reasons for the Recommendation

3. The appeal site comprises vacant grassland adjoining a row of terraced houses, with the end terrace featuring a prominent side elevation. It is located on a corner plot, next to the heavily trafficked A-road lined with street and traffic lighting. The surrounding area has a mixed character, with the appeal site adjoining residential dwellings, and other retail, office and light industrial uses in the vicinity.
4. The appeal site is not subject to any statutory landscape or heritage asset designations. However, the Grade II listed buildings of Albion Mill and Byron Mill, dating from the mid-19th century, are situated nearby. These multiple storey historic buildings are of a rectangular form, with giant pilasters marking the angles. They both feature a slight protruding central section, with the closest one having a raised pointed panel inscribed with 'Albion Mill 1843'. They feature a red brick exterior, slate roof, and a uniform, repeating and linear array of vertical windows, with either stone or brick sills and lintels, which are distinctive to the front elevations facing London Road. Their functional design and these features clearly distinguish them as former mills. As such, their significance is derived from their architectural and historical role in industrial production.

5. The proposal would be sited against a side elevation of the terraced row and visible only from one direction, with intervening buildings separating it from the historic mills. Even so, on a southbound approach along London Road, the side elevation of the terrace is prominent, and there is a clear and defining increase in building height, rising from the lower terraced properties towards the listed buildings. This hierarchy is especially apparent due to the bend in the road, which creates extended, unfolding views and allows the historic buildings to be seen from a greater distance. As such, they emerge gradually and distinctly as focal points, with the appeal site occupying the foreground from this approach. The continuous line of mature trees on the opposite side of the street further accentuates the historic mills, and these views form a defining and positive characteristic of the area and, specifically, the setting of the listed buildings.
6. The proposal represents the smallest form of a large format outdoor advertisement, but would nonetheless be of considerable size and scale, with a strong rectangular build. Combined with its prominent and angled siting on the open corner plot, it would have a pronounced and dominant presence. Its appearance would be intensified by the modern, internally illuminated digital LED panels and frequently changing imagery, which would jar with the backdrop of the historic listed buildings.
7. Such advertisements are commonplace across the UK and can be found within conservation areas and the setting of listed buildings. Even so, the proposal would stand alone in a contrived and unconnected manner. By reason of its scale, siting, design and illumination, whilst it would not obstruct views, it would disrupt the pleasant and high quality, unfolding sightlines along the road towards the listed buildings, thereby detracting from the ability to appreciate and experience them. It would, therefore, diminish their significance and the important contribution they make to the character, appearance and history of the area.
8. The appeal site had historically hosted an externally illuminated advertisement board and was previously used for storage of building equipment, where advertisements were placed on the hoarding panels. However, these have all been removed and the site is now an open, vacant plot. They also do not set any positive design precedent. Whilst digital upgrades have consolidated advertising panels nationwide, there are currently no advertising structures on site. As such, the proposal would not reduce advertisements or visual clutter in this instance but would introduce a new solid structure that has not been present for some time.
9. Various types of advertisements are present in the wider area, and some fascia, freestanding and banner signs exist in the vicinity. These are however, and generally speaking, non-illuminated and of a smaller scale. The section of London Road where the appeal site is located also has a minimal presence of advertisements. Where advertisements are more concentrated, they occur in areas with a distinctly more commercial character than the appeal site.
10. The advertisement would have luminance levels controlled in line with best practice guidance and incorporate sensors to adjust brightness. It would also have a finish mimicking that of a traditional poster and there are existing street and traffic lights along London Road. Even so, the proposal would introduce a new light source of a larger surface area at a lower level that would be obvious particularly during dark hours. It would also be within an area that is currently free from illuminated advertising. Any planning conditions seeking to secure these controls would

not therefore satisfactorily overcome the concerns I have set out, which extend to matters beyond what they would be able to influence.

11. The setting of listed buildings is, in this case, a material consideration with regards to amenity. The duty under Section 66(1) of the Act is not engaged, as it only applies to a grant of planning permission. The balancing of public benefits against heritage harm is, therefore, not applicable, as this only applies to heritage-related consent regimes under the Act.
12. With this and the above in mind, the proposed advertisement would be harmful to the amenity of the area and would fail to satisfy an assessment under the aforementioned Regulations. It would be contrary to the aims of Policies HER 1 and HER 4 of the Site Allocations and Development Policies Document 2022 and Policy SE 7 of the Local Plan Strategy 2017, as far as they are material to the main issue. These seek, amongst other things, for information to be provided to describe the proposal's impact on the asset's significance; for special regard to be had to the desirability of preserving a listed building and its setting; and for the character, quality and diversity of the historic environment to be conserved and enhanced.

Other Matters

13. The proposal would deliver some benefits, including enhanced management and maintenance of the advertisement, greater flexibility, a robust and technologically advanced design, increased business rates to support public services, and provision for emergency messaging, public interest and charity content. Environmental benefits also include fewer servicing trips, reduced noise, waste and carbon emissions, and the use of energy-efficient technology. However, these are either speculative, minimal and it is unclear whether they can be achieved through less harmful means. As such, and putting aside the limitations of what can be considered under the Regulations, they carry only very limited weight and would, should they be relevant, be insufficient to outweigh the harm I have identified.
14. Of the cited examples, some are not sufficiently comparable. They either involved the replacement of an existing advertisement; related to consent for an existing advertisement, but without a time limit condition requiring removal after five years; related to a more commercialised street scene; or are not seen within the setting of a listed building. Several are also located outside of Macclesfield and are therefore not read within the same context as the appeal site.
15. I have not been provided with details of the other cited approvals and refusals in the surrounding area. I cannot thus be sure that they represent a sufficient comparison to the appeal scheme, such that they would change my findings. In any case, they appear to relate to different types of advertising structures than that proposed in this scheme.

Conclusion and Recommendation

16. Due to the harm I have found to amenity, the proposed advertisement would not be acceptable under the aforementioned regulations. I therefore recommend the appeal be dismissed.

Kim Vo

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

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

John Morrison

INSPECTOR