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## Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 9 February 2026 by F Bradford BA (Hons) MRTPI

### Decision by A Edgington BSc (Hons) MA CMLI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 6 July 2026

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### Appeal Ref: APP/E5330/Z/25/3376767

#### 2 - 4 Court Yard, Eltham SE9 5PZ

- 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 Royal Borough of Greenwich.
  - The application Ref is 25/2743/A.
  - The advertisement proposed is the Erection of 1x D-Poster Advertisement.
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### Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

### Appeal Procedure

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.

### Background and Main Issues

3. The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (Regulations), the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) all clarify that advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety. Accordingly, the main issues are the effect of the proposed advertisement on amenity and public safety.

### Reasons for the Recommendation

#### *Amenity*

4. The appeal site is part of the side elevation of a three storey building, 2 - 4 Court Yard. The site is highly visible from long views along Court Road when facing the junction of Well Hall Road and Eltham High Street. Due to its siting, the appeal site is viewed within a wider context of advertisements within the parade of shops along Court Yard and Well Hall Road, as well as some shops located along Eltham High Street and across the junction. Despite the primarily commercial nature of the area, the majority of advertisements are limited to traditional fascia signs at ground floor level or are integrated into kiosks and bus shelter structures.
5. The advertisement would be some 4.5 metres tall, with its base positioned 5 metres above ground level. It would be located on the side elevation of 2 - 4 Court Yard, and would cover about half the width of that side elevation. By virtue of its size, the proposal would occupy a substantial area of the existing side elevation, appearing

as a dominant and disproportionate addition. Furthermore, due to its illumination, siting and subsequent visibility afforded through long views along Court Road, the advertisement would appear visually intrusive and incongruous within its context, thereby harming amenity.

6. Whilst there are electronic advertisement screens at 2a and 6 Well Hall Road, these are independent advertisement units in the form of a kiosk and bus stop, respectively. By virtue of their siting at ground level and limited size, they have a lesser impact on the amenity of the area and are therefore not comparable to the appeal scheme. Although the height of nearby buildings is variable, and includes a five storey apartment block, this does not justify or mitigate the impact of the advertisement on the side elevation of 2 - 4 Court Yard.
7. For these reasons, the advertisement would be harmful to amenity. This would conflict with the Regulations and Policy DH(f) of the Local Plan (LP) which states that advertisements should harmonise with the scale and character of the surrounding area and are not fixed to flank walls where they would be unduly dominant. There would also be conflict with LP Policy DH1, and London Plan Policies D3 and D8 insofar as these are concerned with amenity in the public realm. I also find conflict with paragraph 141 of the Framework which recognises that the quality of and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed.

#### *Public Safety*

8. The PPG<sup>1</sup> notes that all advertisements are intended to attract attention and advertisements at points where drivers need to take more care are more likely to affect public safety. This includes at junctions or other places where local conditions present traffic hazards.
9. The appeal site is located near the traffic-light controlled junction of Well Hall Road and Eltham High Street. At the time of my mid-morning visit, the junction was busy with vehicular traffic, although traffic levels are likely to be notably higher during peak periods. I also observed pedestrians crossing the junction without waiting for the designated signal of the Pelican crossings. This activity extended southwards along Court Yard from the junction.
10. Towards the junction of Court Yard and Well Hall Road, the speed limit reduces from 30mph to 20mph. The appeal site is visible within both speed zones. After entering the 20mph section, the carriageway widens to form two approach lanes, requiring drivers to position themselves appropriately for their intended movement through the junction. This part of Court Yard also contains two bus stops and a number of on-street parking spaces.
11. The advertisement would be sited towards the end of the widening of the road, where the two directive lanes are formalised through road markings just prior to the junction and traffic lights. Its positioning would mean that it would be seen in the context of the approach to the lights.
12. The advertisement would be illuminated and display images changing at regular intervals, introducing a prominent element within the street beyond that of the existing blank wall of the building, particularly during the hours of darkness. The

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<sup>1</sup> ID: 18b-067-20140306 (In what locations are advertisements more likely to affect public safety on the roads?)

appellant states that due to the speed limit and timing between different advertisements, the display would change no more than once for approaching drivers. Whilst conditions could be used to limit the frequency of which advertisements are displayed, such a requirement would not reduce the advertisement's prominence arising from its illumination and placement.

13. Existing conditions present traffic hazards, including the requirement for drivers to comprehend and position accordingly in the correct lane, other vehicles already queueing at the junction, buses stopping to pick up or drop off passengers, and vehicles entering or leaving the parking bays. As a result, there are already several distractions which draw the attention of road users in a context in which drivers need to be alert.
14. The advertisement would draw drivers' attention away from understanding the road layout and positioning into the correct lane, pedestrians crossing, changing traffic lights, and queues of vehicles waiting at the junction. It would also cause a distraction when manoeuvres are being undertaken by buses and other vehicles within the aforementioned highway context of the site. All of these situations have the potential to occur within a small section of the road where drivers and other road users need to be alert. This additional distraction, when combined with the existing traffic hazards, would increase the potential for conflict between road users and would therefore harmfully affect public safety. Advertisements are designed to draw attention, and it would therefore introduce an additional distraction to highway users.
15. The appellant contends that the existing incident record for the site's immediate context does not present a cause for concern with regard to highway safety in relation to the proposal. However, historic incident data is inherently limited in its ability to predict future road safety outcomes.
16. Furthermore, Figure 4 within the appellant's statement illustrates a vehicle positioned 25 m from the junction signals, corresponding to the Stopping Sight Distance (SSD) defined in Manual for Streets (MfS) for a vehicle travelling at 20 mph. Although MfS defines the SSD as 25 m, this assumes a driver is actively observing the road ahead and able to react immediately. By placing the advertisement within this SSD zone, as shown in Figure 4, there would be an increased likelihood that a driver's attention is diverted away from the road at the critical moment when MfS assumes they would be perceiving hazards. This would effectively lengthen the driver's SSD, thereby increasing the risk of collision in an already hazardous context.
17. The appellant suggests that digital advertising is a familiar feature of urban roads and would therefore not appear incongruous to drivers. However, the proposal would introduce a large, elevated, illuminated display in a location where no comparable signage exists. In this specific position, the advertisement would not read as an expected part of the streetscape but as a new and visually prominent element.
18. Transport for London did not object to the scheme as the road is a borough highway, requiring the Council's consideration. Although the Local Highway Authority did not provide a consultation response, this does not preclude the proposal from being assessed against public safety.

19. For the above reasons, the advertisement would be harmful to public safety. The advertisement would conflict with the Regulations, LP Policy DH(f) and Paragraph 141 of the Framework insofar as these are concerned with public safety, including pedestrians and drivers.
20. The Council has also cited LP Policies IM4 and IM(b) and Policy T4 of the London Plan. However, these are concerned either with strategic transport issues or sustainable travel options, and carry very little weight against the appeal.

### **Other Matters**

21. The appellant has drawn my attention to economic, environmental, and social benefits arising from the scheme. These include reducing carbon by using an LED screen, eliminating the need for frequent deliveries of paper advertisements, the use of the advertisement for charitable campaigns or emergency messaging, and the uplift in rent of the building and subsequent business rates payable to the Council. However, the Regulations, Framework and PPG do not indicate that factors other than amenity and public safety are determinative. The one exception to this is sign posting in rural areas, which does not apply to this proposal. Accordingly, there is no basis to consider these benefits, and, in any event, I have no evidence before me which indicates that these benefits could not be provided in a less harmful way.
22. I have been provided with a number of examples where digital advertisement displays have been granted consent with regard to public safety matters, including sites in Manchester, Wakefield in addition to other sites within London. Whilst I do not have full details of these cases, the site context is different. As such, these appeals are not comparable. In any event, each proposal must be assessed on its own merits.

### **Conclusion and Recommendation**

23. For the reasons given above, I recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

*Finlay Bradford*

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

### **Inspector's Decision**

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

*A Edgington*

INSPECTOR