



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 March 2026

by K Mee BA(Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8 April 2026

Appeal Ref: 6003437

827 Stockport Road, Manchester M19 3PN

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended) (the Regulations) against a refusal to grant express consent.
 - The appeal is made by Wildstone Estates Limited against the decision of Manchester City Council.
 - The application Ref is 144047/AOH/2025.
 - The advertisement proposed is the erection of a digital advertisement display.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The Regulations require that decisions are made only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of any material factors. The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) and the Planning Practice Guidance reiterate this approach. In line with this, I have taken into account the provisions of the development plan insofar as they are material to the matters of amenity and public safety.
3. The appeal has been accompanied by a Highway Safety Report. This document was not submitted to the Council at the application stage. The document has been provided at appeal in response to one of the reasons given for refusal. Crucially, this document was not before the Council, its consultees or any interested parties at the application stage, and I cannot be certain that this document has been reviewed by all parties with an interest in this appeal. This is tantamount to the submission of new information. The Planning Inspectorate Appeals' Procedure Guide makes it clear that the appeal process should not be used to evolve a scheme, and it is important that what is considered by the Inspector is essentially what was considered by the Council. I have not therefore considered this new information in this appeal as it would prejudice the Council, its decision and any interested parties.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the proposal on the amenity of the area; and
 - the effect of the proposal on public safety.

Reasons

Amenity

5. Buildings within this area predominantly host a commercial use at ground floor level and with some residential accommodation above. Signage in the locality is generally restricted to fascia signage, with small projecting signs above, but all appear to be connected to the business occupying the premises. There are also some examples of smaller non-illuminated signage on corner properties at high level. Collectively, this signage and advertising contribute to a lively street scene commensurate with the level of commercial development.
6. The proposed digital display would be fixed to the gable of 827 Stockport Road, a 3-storey end of terrace property with its gable fronting onto a small area of public open space, which contains landscaping, sculptures, artwork and several benches. Collectively, these elements help to create an attractive area of public space in an otherwise busy and commercial area of Levenshulme.
7. During my site visit I observed that the gable wall currently hosts a blank advertisement board at high level. This existing advertisement is larger than the proposed development. However, its prominence is softened by the lack of illumination and static nature. Therefore, while larger than is typical in the street scene, it is not so visually intrusive as to erode the amenity of the surrounding area. In contrast, the proposed digital advertisement would be internally illuminated throughout the day and into the hours of darkness with frequently changing images. Given its scale and prominent siting, this illumination and changing imagery would result in a significant and intrusive feature.
8. Moreover, while the surrounding area is busy and commercial in character, the adjacent public garden provides a welcome and pleasant contrast, clearly intended for relaxation and leisure, as a place to sit. The introduction of an illuminated advertisement directly alongside it, with frequently changing images, would significantly diminish the quality of this amenity experience. This would affect users whether passing through or seated within the garden, irrespective of their precise position relative to the display.
9. During my site visit, I observed a similar digital advertisement sited nearby at high level on 958-960 Stockport Road, which was allowed on appeal (APP/B4215/Z/22/3296481). However, the context of the surrounding built form in that location is materially different, as the advertisement is read above neighbouring roof tops and framed by buildings on both side of the road. While the advertisement type is similar, its context, siting and visual relationship with the street scene are not directly comparable to the appeal proposal. Moreover, its effect on the nearby public garden is significantly reduced due to the greater separation distance and intervening activity.
10. I have also considered the appellant's reference to other advertisements in the wider area. These include at 48 Ashton Old Road, 216 Upper Brook Street, Pottery Lane, 123-125 Rochdale Road and 14-18 Hyde Road. However, these examples are not directly comparable in terms of their location, siting and context, particularly as they are not next to amenity spaces like the proposal which is the subject of this appeal. They do not therefore provide justification for a similar installation in a location with different visual characteristics. Moreover, other

examples do not set a precedent for an advertisement that I find would be harmful for its own specific reasons.

11. My attention is now drawn to the effect of the proposal upon residential amenity. The properties on the opposite side of Stockport Road appear to contain residential accommodation at first floor level. The introduction of an illuminated advertisement with frequently changing images would result in a change to the existing situation. However, given the separation distance, presence of intervening street lighting and the reduced night-time luminance proposed by the appellant, I find that the advertisement would not harm the amenity of neighbouring residents.
12. I therefore conclude that, while not adversely affecting residential amenity, the proposal would cause significant harm to the visual amenity of the area due to its size, location, positioning and rotating digital illumination. In this regard, the advertisement would conflict with the aims of Paragraph 141 of the Framework. Although not determinative, the advertisement conflicts with Policies EN1, SP1 and DM1 of the Manchester Core Strategy Development Plan Document (July 2012) (the Core Strategy) which require, amongst other things, that development is of good design and, where along radial routes, should be commensurate in scale with the prominence of its location.
13. Furthermore, Saved Policies E3.3, DC15.1 and DC15.2 of the Unitary Development Plan for the City of Manchester (the UDP), seek, amongst other things, that new development along radial and orbital routes, such as Stockport Road, should be of the highest quality. Also, that applications for advertisements should take account of the effect on visual amenity, the scope for posters and hoardings to make a positive contribution to the locality, and that developments of this kind should be in scale with the locality and be unobtrusive.

Public Safety

14. The proposed advertisement would be positioned at right angles to Stockport Road. However, given the adjacent area of open space, longer range views from the northern approach would be possible. The Council expressed concern over the siting and proximity of the advertisement to the nearby traffic signals at the Stockport Road and Albert Road junction, in that it would create a distracting backdrop for approaching northbound drivers. Particularly, given that the principal road has four lanes at this location and there are many distractions in the locality from the numerous shops on either side of the road.
15. However, at the approach to this junction, the level of illumination and frequency of image changes, which could be controlled by condition, would not result in an unacceptable level of distraction for road users. This would not result in an unacceptable effect on public safety, due to the time between each image and the relatively straight nature of Stockport Road where views of the proposed advertisement would be momentary.
16. I therefore conclude that the proposed advertisement would not have a detrimental effect on public safety. I have taken into account Policies T1, SP1 and DM1 of the Core Strategy and Saved Policies E3.3, DC15.1 and DC15.2 of the UDP which, amongst other things, require development to have regard to road safety.

Other Matter

17. The appellant has cited benefits of the proposed advertisement for my consideration of this appeal. However, advertisements are controlled only in the interests of amenity and public safety and as such these benefits make no difference to my overall conclusion.

Conclusion

18. I have found that the proposed advertisement would not unduly harm public safety. However, for the reasons given above, I have found that the display of the advertisement would result in undue harm to amenity. The appeal should therefore be dismissed.

K Mee

INSPECTOR