



## City of Westminster

### **PLEASE NOTE**

The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) policies and planning, building control and other legislation and regulations referred to in the text of this guide were current at the time of publication. Because this guidance is an electronic version of the printed guidance as approved and adopted, these references have NOT been changed. For ease of contact; names, telephone numbers and locations have been regarded as non-material editorial changes and have been updated.

As UDP policies and government legislation may have changed over time, before carrying out any work, it is recommended that you consult the current UDP

<http://www.westminster.gov.uk/planningandlicensing/udp/index.cfm> for policy revisions and you may wish to check with planning and/or building control officers about your proposals.

## ADVERTISEMENT DESIGN GUIDELINES



Through this Design Guide, the Council aims to make two general points: the first concerns the design of individual advertisements. An advertisement can be visually good or bad irrespective of how much it costs and regardless of whether the firm or product it advertises is big, small, long established, new traditional, modern, expensive or cheap.

The second point concerns the cumulative visual effect which advertisements - of either good or bad design - have on the character of areas and on the general townscape. Excessive and un-coordinated advertising creates visual disorder and can easily defeat its own purpose, which is to attract attention to a particular product, service or place.

In general terms, the quality of advertisements depends primarily on whether they show concern for the buildings and the areas which they affect and, through this, respect for the public to whom they are directed. Almost invariably, following these fundamental principles of good design will lead to visual and commercial success.

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## **1. Introduction**

Outdoor advertising is an important feature in the street scene of many parts of Westminster, especially in the more commercial parts of the West End. As well as having the practical purpose of providing information about businesses, goods, events and other matters, its presence is often a great influence on the appearance of a street as seen by the passer-by. Consider how different Piccadilly Circus, Leicester Square, Oxford Street or Regent Street would look without any shop signs or illuminated displays, or how a quiet residential terrace would appear if covered in signs and lights.

The overall design of individual advertisements, their size, what they are made of, whether they are illuminated, the type of building they are on, their position on the building, the appearance of surrounding buildings and their cumulative effect, are all important factors in the impact of a single advertisement on the street scene. A particular design may be appropriate in one location, on a particular building, but the same design may appear discordant on a different building or in a different place.

The City Council is principally concerned to ensure that all outdoor advertising is of high quality, well suited to the building or street for which it is proposed and makes a positive contribution to the appearance and character of an area. The City Council's statutory policies for outdoor advertising are contained in Chapter 9 of the Unitary Development Plan. These design guidelines are based on those policies but are non-statutory advice, published to assist property owners who are considering displaying advertisements.

Specific proposals, especially on listed buildings and within conservation areas, can be discussed with officers of the Development Division of the Planning and Transportation Department (see 'Contacts' at the end of this booklet).

## 2. Legislation

The current powers of local authorities over outdoor advertisements are set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (principally sections 220-225) and the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992. The legislation appears complex, especially on first reading. A good free summary, '**Outdoor Advertising and Signs, a Guide for Advertisers**' was published by the Department of the Environment in 1989 and is currently under revision to incorporate the 1992 Regulations.

Some particularly relevant sections in the 1992 Regulations are the following:

Regulation 7, which gives the Secretary of State for the Environment the power to bring under direct planning control the display of any advertisements which normally do not require the Local Planning Authority's consent.

Regulation 8, which gives a Local Planning Authority powers to discontinue the display of an advertisement which initially did not need to obtain express consent.

Regulation 27, which defines liability and fines in cases of contravention of the Regulations.

Additional considerations relating to listed buildings and conservation areas are contained in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

It is not intended to summarise the legislation in these guidelines but advice on whether consent is required in individual cases can be sought from the City Council. Please try and follow the general advice given in these guidelines which are intended to maintain and improve the quality of outdoor advertising and the appearance of Westminster.

## 3. General Principles

The principle factors which the City Council will normally consider when determining applications for advertisement consent are as follows:

### 3.1 The Character or Appearance of the Area

Advertisements should respect the character or appearance of the local area. In predominantly residential areas advertisements will principally be restricted to business premises, and the minimum amount of advertising should be used. In the more commercial parts of the City there are already many advertisements and there are already many advertisements and they are themselves often contributors to the character of the area, such as in Leicester Square or China Town. In the more commercial areas the City Council will use its powers flexibly, taking into account the principles listed in these guidelines and seeking to ensure that advertisements, either individually or cumulatively, are not damaging to the character and appearance of individual buildings, streets or areas of the City.

Within conservation areas, which include around three quarters of the City, the City Council has greater powers of control. Here all advertisements will be expected to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area. A stricter line will be taken on the design, materials, method of illumination, positioning, number, type and scale of advertisements allowed.



## **Regent Street, W1**

### **Jermyn Street, SW1**

*In Conservation Areas the Council will ensure that advertisements preserve or enhance the character of buildings and streets. The size, form, materials, colours, positioning and lettering of advertisements are all important considerations. In Conservation Areas, advertisements should be designed to relate to the character of the buildings on which they are attached and should be visibly compatible with the traditional appearance of their street.*



**Piccadilly, W1**



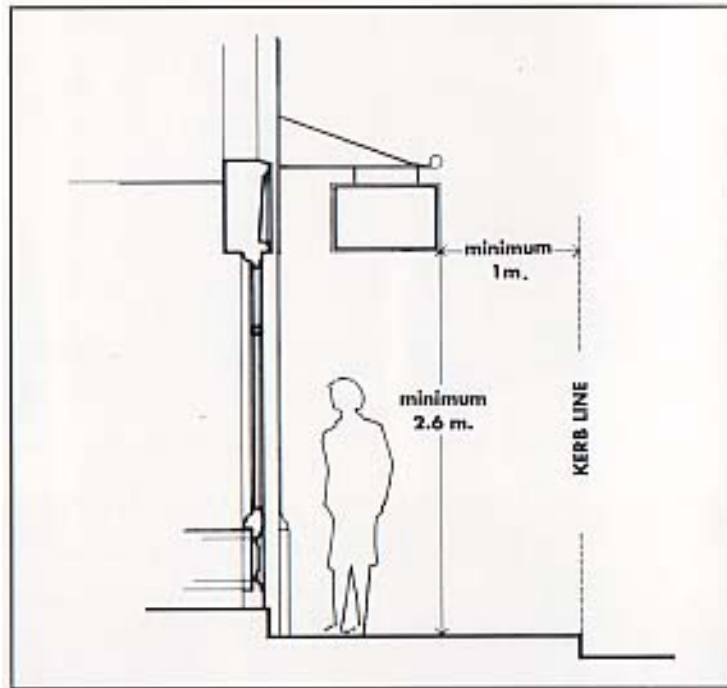
**Covent Garden, WC2**

*Examples of advertising signs on listed buildings. On a listed building, advertisements should be designed as architectural elements of the building, normally following its character in terms of style, materials and colours.*

### **3.2 The Character and Appearance of Buildings**

Most advertisements are fixed to buildings and should be designed to suit the scale, proportions, period, architectural detailing and use of the building. Advertisements on listed buildings will generally require listed building consent, even where advertisement consent is not required, and must be designed and attached to the building with particular care. They must not harm the character of the building or obscure architectural features.

Advertisements positioned inside listed buildings, for example behind the window glass, may also require listed building consent and illumination may not be permitted. Advertisements close to listed buildings, should also be designed with regard to the setting of those buildings.



***Recommended positioning of projecting signs in relation to the fascia, pavement and kerb lines.***

### **3.3 The Position on a Building or in the Street**

Advertisements should be confined to the ground floor or basement area of buildings. Projecting signs should be fixed to the pilasters or columns between buildings, or the fascia above the ground floor window, in one exists.

Advertisements fixed above the ground floor will not normally be allowed, unless they cannot reasonably be fixed at a lower level, or if it can be demonstrated that they make a positive contribution to the character of an area or a building.

Attention will be paid to the potential impact of the advertisement upon pedestrian and vehicular safety.

Advertisements will not normally be allowed to be fixed to street furniture within conservation areas, London Squares or other sensitive locations such as adjacent to the Royal Parks or listed buildings.



***A co-ordinated scheme of well designed advertisements, restricted***



***Queensway, W2, April 1990. Excessive numbers and unrelated positioning of***

*to one projecting sign per shop, avoids visual clutter and attracts attention to each individual shop (Example: Cecil Court, WC2)*

*advertisements create visual clutter, disorder and confusion. Not only can it obstruct the visual appreciation of buildings but it can also defeat its own purpose, i.e. to attract attention to a particular building or shop. In considering applications for new advertisements, the Council will take into account the number of advertisements which already exist on the building or on adjacent buildings.*

### **3.4 The Number of Other Advertisements on the Building or in the Street**

The number of advertisement should be kept to the minimum necessary to convey essential information, even in commercial areas. Only one advertisement, or one projecting and one fascia sign on each principal frontage will normally be permitted. The appearance of a large number of advertisements on a building or in a street is often counter-productive because it becomes difficult to pick out one individual advertisement and can be very disruptive to the appearance and architectural character of an area. When preparing designs for new advertisements, the opportunity should be taken to reduce the number of signs on the building or structure and remove those which are redundant.

Where the City Council considers that harms is being caused by advertisements that do not normally require express consent, as in the case of Estate Agents' boards, they will apply to the Secretary of State for the Environment for additional controls in the interest of amenity.

### **3.5 Materials, Illumination and Detailed Design**

In general, traditional materials such as painted timber, wrought iron, bronze and other alloys or ceramics will be more appropriate than acrylics and other plastics, especially within conservation areas and on listed buildings. Harsh and gaudy fluorescent colours, unsympathetic to the building, should be avoided. In considering applications for illuminated advertisements the Council will also be concerned to control any unreasonable intensity of light and its dazzling effect on drivers.

Within conservation areas and residential areas or on listed buildings, illuminated signs will only be permitted where their design is well related to the buildings on which they are to be fixed. Internally illuminated signs should take the form of individually mounted and lit letters or symbols on a background made of appropriate materials. External illumination is generally preferable; it should be discreetly fixed and the minimum to allow the sign to be seen at night. The colour and brightness of the illumination and its ability to distract or confuse passing drivers will be taken into account. The size of lettering and logos should be in proportion to the detailing of the building.

Discretion must be exercised in the application of a corporate image, especially within conservation areas and on listed buildings. It is usually possible to retain the graphic style, with careful use of materials, adaptation of size, and a flexible approach to location. The City Council will expect retail chains and companies to adjust their corporate signs to suit the townscape and individual buildings.



**Wardour Street, W1**



**Piccadilly, W1**

*Examples of advertisements which are inappropriate for the buildings on which they are attached and for their areas in terms of material and/or positioning, detailing, colours, size, style, numbers and lack of co-ordination. (Photos taken between 1983-1988).*

### 3.6 Interpretation and Inter-relationship of General Principles

The Council is fully aware that good design cannot always be achieved by following a simple set of rules, even if they are given in the form of general design principles. Success usually depends on the designer's ability to interpret and inter-relate such principles and to apply them to specific buildings and areas. Applicants for advertisement consent, or anyone who wants to display an advertisement, are encouraged to seek advice from specialist professional designers.

The following examples show how the general principles of good advertisement design inter-relate and work together. In certain exceptional cases where a high quality of overall design has been applied, some of the general principles have been relaxed with success.



**Bond Street, W1**



**Connaught Street, W2**

*Traditional materials, colours and style are recommended in principle on old buildings and can be highly successful (far left), but excessive size can still make an advertisement inappropriate, by obliterating important parts of the building (left).*



**Oxford Street, W1**



**Maiden Lane, WC2**

*The Council is actively discouraging the use of excessive, overpowering advertising (far left), but given the right colour scheme, good design, appropriate materials, and the right kind of building, exuberant advertising can be acceptable (left). (See also, Advertisements on Particular Types of Premises, p. 21).*



**Covent Garden, WC2**



**Charing Cross Road, WC2**

*Co-ordination is one of the characteristics, which the Council's policy is aiming to achieve (far left), but, if taken to extremes, it can easily become uninteresting repetition (left).*



**Connaught Street, W2**



**Old Compton Street, W1**

*The Council encourages, in principle, the use of non-illuminated fascia signs (far left), but, if illumination is not excessive and the sign is carefully designed, such fascia signs can be acceptable (left).*



**Oxford Street, W1**



**New Bond Street, W1**

*The Council does not encourage the use of modern materials on old buildings (far left), but given high quality design, modern materials can sometimes match the quality and character of old buildings, (left).*



*Advertisements involving 'figurative' representations are normally acceptable only if they are strictly incorporated in the design of the buildings concerned. However, three dimensional compositions with no direct reference to the style of the building have sometimes been approved. In some cases even illuminated figures unrelated to the character of the building can be acceptable. Left is an example of an advertisement of this kind, which was approved because it is contained within the fascia of the*



*shopfront, it is laconic and simple, and introduces an element of humorous 'pop' symbolism.*

### **Old Compton Street, W1**



*Also, although the use of direct trade-representational figures is normally not encouraged, in certain cases it has been appropriate and not out of character with the buildings on which they are displayed (left).*

### **Regent Street, W1**

## **4. Application for Advertisement Consent**

Applications should be made on the forms provided by the City Council and available from One-Stop Services at City Hall or 313 Harrow Road. The forms should be accompanied by scaled drawings, preferably prepared by a specialist designer, showing the location of the proposed advertisement on the building or in the street, the method and type of fixing and illumination (if proposed) and the materials and colours to be used. Sections and elevational drawings will normally be required and the height of projecting signs from the pavement should be shown. A decision is likely to be obtained more speedily if good quality, photographs of the building are included in the submission.

## **5. Fascia Signs**

These should be contained within the original architectural fascia of the building and only show the name/nature of the business. Incorporating the street number in the fascia sign is desirable in all cases.

The illumination of fascias requires careful consideration. Bulky, internally illuminated box signs constructed from non-traditional materials such as perspex, produce a crude effect and are unlikely to be allowed within conservation areas or on listed buildings. More subtle and acceptable solutions can be provided by fascias made from traditional materials such as painted timber, externally lit by carefully directed light beams or internally lit individually mounted letters standing proud of the fascia. This approach should also be taken outside conservation areas.

Well designed lettering on the windows or door may be an alternative to a fascia sign, but these should not be automatically treated as an additional area for signage.

Further advice on fascia signs is given in the City Council's publication '**Shopfronts, Blinds and Signs**' (1990).



*Examples of fascia signs of traditional or modern appearance, designed to complement the buildings and their streets.*

**Old Bond Street, W1**



*Neon illumination on shopfront fascia advertisements is normally acceptable only if it is limited and is integrated into the appearance of the whole of the elevation.*

**Jermyn Street, SW1**



*Exemplary incorporation of the fascia sign within the original character of this building and the appearance of the street. Note the spot lights above, providing a successful way of illumination.*

**Old Compton Street, W1**

**Regent Street, W1**

*Acceptable adaptation of corporate-image fascia-sign to fit the appearance of this building. (Note unsuccessful application of corporate projecting sign and entrance logo.)*



**Oxford Street, W1**

**6. Projecting or Hanging Signs**

Signs on timber or metal hanging boards of modest size and good proportions are a traditional feature of commercial streets and, where possible, original brackets and boards should be retained. Hanging signs on wrought iron brackets are almost always preferable to solid projecting box signs, especially within conservation areas, but exceptions may be made on modern buildings. Projecting signs should normally be located at fascia height and preferably on the pilaster, unless this would damage important architectural features. The minimum height from the pavement and distance from the kerb line are shown in Figure 13.

Internally illuminated projecting signs will not normally be allowed in conservation areas or on listed buildings. Hanging signs may be illuminated by a 'picture' strip-light fixed above or below the sign, covered by a metal cowl or by a single spot lights fixed to the sign.

Additional guidance is given in the City Council's guide '**Shopfronts, Blinds and Signs**' (1990).

*Examples of projecting and hanging signs, which do not damage the appearance of the buildings or their streets.*



**Burlington Gardens, W1    Dover Street, W1**

## 7. Other Signs on Commercial Properties

### 7.1 Signs on Windows

Professionally painted non-illuminated signs on windows are a traditional alternative to projecting and fascia signs. They can be a particularly useful alternative to projecting signs, for businesses operating only from the upper floors of a building and may be acceptable if executed in a traditional manner.



*An example of signs painted on windows, which are normally acceptable.*

**Mount Street, W1**



*An advertisement which does not relate to the building on which it is attached.*

**Victoria, SW1**

### 7.2 Signs Fixed to a Building, that are Unrelated to the Business Being Carried on in the Building

Permanent advertisements or structures fixed to a building for the display of advertisements unrelated to the business being carried on in the building, are unlikely to receive consent from the City Council. Given the large number of advertisements relating to commercial activities within individual buildings, the City Council is concerned to reduce additional advertisements to a minimum, especially in conservation areas

or other sensitive locations. (Advice on temporary advertisements and hoardings is given further on in these guidelines).

### 7.3 Advertisements on Street Level Front Boundary Railings

These should normally be avoided, especially in a conservation areas, unless a small sign fixed to the railings is the only way of drawing attention to the existence of, for example, a separate unit at building level, with direct access from the street. Ground floor railings are often a suitable position for fixing temporary estate agents' boards.



**Green Street, W1 (1990)**

### 7.4 Advertisements on Forecourts and the Public Highway

Free-standing signs, such as 'A' boards on the public highway (which includes the pavement) will very rarely be permitted, because of the obstruction they cause to pedestrians. A separate consent is necessary under the Highways Act for any temporary or permanent obstruction on the highway.

Non-illuminated signs on private forecourts are normally allowed, subject to their size and positioning. Illuminated signs require consent from the City Council and will be considered in terms of the criteria outlined in Section 3 of these guidelines.



*Examples of advertisements in forecourts and public highways. This form of advertising will be resisted by the Council.*

**Oxford Street, W1**

### 8. Signs on Blinds and Awnings

Blinds and awnings are seldom the best means for permanent display of advertisements, because they require permanent maintenance and tend to obscure the front of the building and other signs beneath them.

A traditional fascia sign or hanging board, is generally a more effective advertisement than one appearing on a blind or awning.

The City Council rarely allows blinds or awnings above ground floor level. Further information on blinds is contained in the City Council's guide '**Shopfronts, Blinds, and Signs**' (1990).



*Examples of advertisements on blinds and awnings, which do not detract from the character of the building or the appearance of the area.*

*The Council will resist plastic blinds and awnings of bright colours when they do not relate to the character of the building, especially in conservation areas and on listed buildings.*

**Bond Street, W1**

### **9. Flags and Banners**

Flags on public buildings and foreign diplomatic premises are a traditional and colourful feature of central London. In recent years, however, flags and banners have become an increasingly popular form of commercial advertising. In some commercial areas flags may be a suitable form of display but within residential areas and conservation areas and on listed buildings, the City Council will be principally concerned to safeguard the character and appearance of the area and individual buildings. Even in commercial areas, flags and banners will not necessarily be considered an acceptable form of advertising, especially at high level.



*Even well designed commercial flags and banners can be unacceptable on grounds of positioning and proliferation.*

**Bond Street, W1**

### **10. Hoardings and Poster Sites**

Permanent hoardings or structures fixed to buildings to display advertisements will rarely be permitted by the City Council, particularly in residential areas, conservation areas and on or close to listed buildings.

Where they do not relate to the land or its development, commercial advertisements on temporary hoardings, such as those around building sites or vacant land, will not normally be permitted by the City Council in conservation areas or around listed buildings. As an alternative, site owners are encouraged to consider painting their temporary hoardings in a decorative manner, to add interest to the street scene, while building works take place.



*Advertisements on hoardings, by their sheer size and bold content usually harm the scale, colour effect, roofline and overall appearance of any area and especially conservation areas. On residential buildings, the erection of an advertising hoarding may even be legally treated as a Change of Use.*

### **Vauxhall Bridge Road, SW1 (1991)**



*The Council will encourage contractors to decorate temporary hoarding on building sites in a way which will enhance the appearance of the area during the time building works are carried out on the site. The Council's booklet '**Considerate Builders**' (1989) contains more detailed advice on this matter. (Contact: 020 7641 3402)*

### **Leicester Square, WC2 (1990)**

## **11. Advertisements on Street Furniture**

Westminster has an outstanding heritage of interesting and historic street furniture. This includes drinking fountains and cattle troughs, statues and memorials, post boxes and telephone kiosks. In addition there are numerous street lights, traffic signs, litter bins, planting boxes, benches, bus shelters and similar structures, all competing for space on the pavement and the attention of the passers-by.

In recent years, the City Council has been seeking to reduce and rationalise the amount of unnecessary street furniture and visual clutter, especially in conservation areas. New, free standing structures to display advertisements will therefore rarely be allowed in sensitive locations such as conservation areas, and consent to display advertisements on existing or new street furniture will rarely be granted.

## **12. Advertisements on Particular Types of Premises**

### **12.1 Theatres, Cinemas and Other Public Entertainment Buildings**

These buildings have historically displayed numerous and bright lit signs. However, individual proposals will be considered in terms of their design merits, relationship to the building, and contribution to the day and night time character and appearance of the street and area.

Many theatres and other public entertainment buildings are listed as being of special architectural and/or historic interest and advertisements should be particularly sensitive to their architectural features and details. Advertisements above ground floor level, should normally be displayed on light-weight structures allowing the fabric of the building to be seen beneath. Consideration can also be given to floodlighting architectural features where this would enhance the character and appearance of the building and its surroundings. The lighting units should be hidden from view, as far as possible.



*Examples of advertisements on theatres, which do not obscure the buildings on which they appear. As far as it feasible, the Council will insist on this approach being taken, especially on listed buildings.*

### **Covent Garden, WC2**

## 12.2 Public Houses

Public houses have traditionally displayed a variety of advertisements which in some cases have not changed since the premises were first opened. The City Council is keen to see traditional signs retained or restored and may permit a limited number of high level signs where these have previously existed or are a feature of public houses in the area.



*On Public Houses the Council will encourage this type of high quality traditional advertising.*

**St. Martin's Court, WC2**

The general considerations for all advertisements outlined in Section 3, and the guidelines on specific types of sign elsewhere in this booklet will also be applied. Particular consideration should be given to retaining and/or devising an overall design scheme for the advertisements on a public house so that individual elements respect the architectural features and appear as a co-ordinated whole.

## 12.3 Department Stores

Large scale signs on department store buildings will not normally be considered acceptable as they can be obtrusive features in the streetscene. However in appropriate circumstances, individual proposals will be considered in terms of their design, their relationship to the building, their contribution to the day and night time appearance of the street and the character and appearance of the area.



*Applications for this type of advertisement above ground floor level will be considered on their own merits on grounds of suitability for the building and the area.*

**Regent Street, W1**

## 12.4 Hotels and Other Commercial Uses of Originally Residential Premises

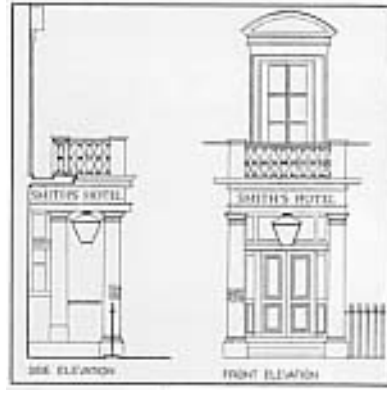
The great majority of hotels in Westminster occupy buildings of modest size, originally designed for residential use. Many of these hotels are in predominantly residential areas, such as Pimlico, Bayswater and the Portman Estate.

The City Council is concerned that the original architectural features of the buildings and the residential character of the buildings and areas are respected. Earlier guidelines have been published for Pimlico and Sussex Gardens on the subject of hotel signs. This guide incorporates and updates that advice which is equally applicable to other commercial occupiers of eighteenth and nineteenth century, originally residential, properties.

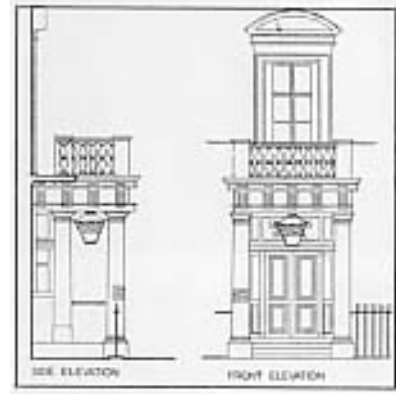
Advertisements should generally be confined to the ground floor of the property and be the minimum size and number necessary to convey information about the business. Normally, this should comprise the only name of the business and the street number. The City Council is particularly concerned that buildings not designed to display commercial signage are not burdened with advertisements. One sign parallel to the main building facade and one at right angles will generally be considered the maximum. If a business occupies two or more adjacent properties, there should be no unreasonable duplication of advertising.



*Acceptable type of Hotel advertisement on stuccoed buildings without a porch.*



*Appropriate type of Hotel advertisement on porch of 19th century stuccoed building with triglyph-decorated classical portico.*



*Suitably designed Hotel advertisement on 19th century stuccoed building with plain-pediment classical porch.*

*Hotel advertisements must respect the domestic character of old residential buildings and areas. Subtle and simple signs incorporated in the original design of the building and the character of the area will be acceptable.*

Illumination should be restrained, especially in predominantly residential areas. Internally illuminated box signs are generally inappropriate and alternative approaches are outlined in the sections on fascia and projecting signs in these guidelines. In all cases the lettering and any supply cabling should be fixed as discreetly as possible and must not obscure original architectural features.

### **13. Advertisements in Particular Areas**

#### **13.1 Bond Street and Regent Street**

Separate guidelines have been published by the City Council on shopfronts and advertisements in these important shopping streets.

#### **13.2 Piccadilly Circus and Leicester Square**

At present, Piccadilly Circus has a recognised character of large scale, illuminated advertisements. Although this is an integral part of the appearance of this area, account must be taken of the scale and architecture of individual buildings. Maintenance gantries and supporting structures should form an integral part of the design and will be considered as part of any application.

Large scale advertisements, especially those promoting products unrelated to the building, will only be allowed on buildings where they are considered suitable. Normally, high level moving advertisements, for example cinematic screens, will not be allowed.



#### ***Piccadilly Circus, W1***

*Although the Council accepts the special tradition of some places with respect to advertisements, wherever possible, extreme ways and forms of advertising in such places, will be resisted. Considerable progress in reducing the impact of excessive*



*advertisements on the appearance of buildings and areas was achieved recently in the case of the London Pavilion in Piccadilly Circus, following the restoration of this historic theatre. The Council will resist the recurrence of excessive advertising on restored buildings in this area.*

In Leicester Square, large scale advertisements should be restricted to the established cinema frontages. High level advertisements will not normally be allowed on other buildings in the Square, and the general design principles outlined in Section 3, will be applied.

(This advice supersedes that published in 1978 on Piccadilly Circus and Leicester Square.)

#### **14. Estate Agents' and Similar Boards**

Temporary signs, announcing that a property is for sale or letting, within certain specified limits as set out in the Advertisements Regulations, can generally be erected without consent. In recent years however the City Council has become increasingly concerned about the proliferation of such boards, especially in certain residential parts of the City but also in the West End. The City Council has therefore obtained from the Secretary of State for the Environment the power to request applications for express consent for the display of any such boards in certain areas. A separate leaflet entitled '**Boardwatch**' has been published by the City Council, showing the restricted areas (known as Regulation 7 Direction Areas).

Following the approval of special controls, the City Council agreed that all applications for estate agents' boards for residential property in the restricted areas will normally be refused and special criteria will apply to commercial buildings. Outside the restricted areas, the maximum size permitted without consent is defined by the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992. Separate listed building consent will be required for display of boards on listed buildings in such areas. Careful attention will be paid to the positioning and method of fixing, to minimise the impact of boards on the character and appearance of listed buildings or conservation areas.



*An example of the unacceptable proliferation of estate agents' advertisements in the Bayswater and Maida Vale areas, before the introduction of special control measures.*



*View of **Elgin Avenue, W9**, free from 'For Sale' and 'To Let' boards, after the Council introduced special measures of control over this type of advertising.*

#### **15. Other Temporary Advertisements**

The City Council receives many proposals for temporary advertisements, either announcing special events or of a seasonal nature, such as Christmas street displays. In recent years these have increasingly sought to promote commercial sponsors and their products. Individual applications will be considered on their merits, taking into account the number, size, form, period of display required, general location, position in the street and amount of 'commercial' advertising they show. Within conservation areas and on or close to listed buildings, as for any other type of advertisement, consent will normally only be granted where the proposal preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the area or building. It should be borne in mind that only the minority of temporary advertisements can normally meet these criteria.



*Certain types of temporary advertisements do not require express consent. Even in such cases however, the Council may have powers to discontinue their display on grounds of amenity and public safety considerations.*

**Gerrard Street, W1**

## **16. Unauthorised Advertisements**

The City Council has powers to take enforcement action against advertisements erected without the necessary consents. These powers include the ability to bring a prosecution in the Magistrates Court, which is used if the offence is especially flagrant or repeated. There is a right of appeal to the Secretary of State for the Environment in cases where advertisement consent has been refused by the City Council or if the City Council is taking 'discontinuance action' against an advertisement which, although legally erected without express consent, is considered to cause serious amenity problems or a danger to the public.

Any form of fly-posting (displaying an advertisement without consent) is an offence against which the City Council can take immediate action, by prosecution, removal or obliteration.

Under section 224(3) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, any person who displays an advertisement in contravention of the 1992 Regulations shall be guilty of an offence. Under the provisions of the Criminal Justice Act 1991 and the Planning and Compensation Act 1991, such a person is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £1,000 and £100 for each day during which the offence continues after conviction.



*An example of unauthorised "fly-posting against which the Council can use its powers to take action, and will do so whenever it is considered appropriate and practical*

## **17. Contacts**

CLICK HERE FOR LINK TO  
WESTMINSTER CITY COUNCIL  
CONTACTS LIST

Department of Planning and City Development, Development Planning Services, July 1992