

PLANNING STATEMENT

Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended) (the "Regulations").

Dear Case Officer,

ADVERTISEMENT DISPLAY: Land at 1 Smithfield Road opposite Eagles Meadow Shopping Centre Wrexham LL13 8EN: PP-11097608

Please find attached, an application for express consent as detailed above. The application seeks consent for:

"The erection and display of a freestanding 48-sheet sized digital LED advertising unit."

The application comprises the following documents and drawings:

- WSR1 Site plan
- WSR2 Location plan
- WSR3 Specification drawing
- This Planning Statement

The site is located within at the edge of a restaurant car park behind a boundary with the pavement consisting of a railing with a clipped laurel hedge behind

The application seeks consent for an internally illuminated 48-sheet (6m by 3m) digital poster display.

The area is in mixed use and is strongly commercial in character. It is dominated by mainly large-scale buildings such as the Eagles Meadow Shopping complex and car park opposite and the Mecca bingo site adjacent.

It is very much a town-centre location and is immediately adjacent to one of the primary retail areas. The site is also dominated by the highway's infrastructure of Smithfield Road and the A5152 Eagles Meadow Link Road as it takes traffic around the shopping centre.

Current View



Proposed display

The proposed scheme is to erect a single 48 sheet digital LED screen freestanding on steel supports behind the railing and hedge at the back of the restaurant car park.

The unit will display a series of static images which will change no more frequently than once every 10 seconds. The image would change instantaneously, without fading or other visual effects and there will be a mechanism to freeze or switch off the image in the event of a malfunction.

Content will be controlled remotely in real time and the site will be monitored remotely to facilitate responsive maintenance. Diagnostics software will report and resolve most issues remotely.

Proposed View



Grounds for Approval

Amenity

The legislative framework for the control of advertisements is contained within The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (Wales) Regulations 2007 (as amended) (the "Regulations").

Regulation 4 requires local planning authorities to control the display of advertisements 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 relating to the characteristics of the locality, such as historic interest, and impact on public safety comprising the safety of persons using any highway and whether the display of the advertisement is likely to obscure the interpretation of a road traffic sign.

This proposal is part of this company's investment in and commitment to a high-quality digital communication infrastructure to meet the advertising needs of modern businesses.

Smithfield Road is a highly traversed and well-lit roadway, meaning that the ambient effect of the proposal is sufficiently contained, in accordance with the

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guidance set out by the Institute of Lighting Practitioners (ILP) which I will detail in the following section on safety.

This section of Smithfield Road and the A5152 Eagles Meadow Link Road, is home to a series of commercial buildings which incorporate signage on the outside, such as the signs and facias of the shopping centre and the Bingo Hall, several of which are large and illuminated.

The proposed display will not be out of proportion with the surrounding built environment and its' tall buildings. The location can absorb the advertisement without detriment, and it will not dominate the wider cityscape.

The 48-sheet format is a commonplace and standard size for roadside advertisements. There is an existing network of 48-sheet displays in Wrexham but not much in the immediate vicinity, so it cannot be said to lead to an excessive, cluttered, or uncoordinated display that would detract from the appearance of the buildings, the site or the locality.

Modern digital screens mimic conventional poster hoarding but are smarter. These units have been architecturally designed with high-quality materials to be modern, clean, simple, and uncluttered. They are the cutting edge of contemporary display, and they can enhance the appearance of a modern progressive urban infrastructure.

The proposal would not be overly obtrusive, incongruous or a discordant feature, and would be consistent with both the regulations and paragraph 136 of the National Planning Policy Framework, and therefore, would cause no adverse impact on amenity.

Public Safety

Planning Policy Guidance suggests that poster advertising which is on a commercial site within a commercial location is unlikely to be so distracting as to be hazardous. This is exactly the case here.

The proposed display would not obstruct or hinder the interpretation of highway signs or signals. The display has been designed with the relevant highway design standards in mind. There will be a clear, visibility splay of more than 50m.

Viewed predominantly from one direction, it would be seen as part of a commercial backdrop. The screen will not come as a surprise to oncoming drivers. This section of highway is wide, clear, and relatively straightforward. Traffic

approaching the advertisement along the A5152 Eagles Meadow Link Road, will be able to safely glance at the display without causing undue distraction.

The unit will display static images, which change no more often than every 10 seconds. The ten-second interval ensures that drivers approaching will see no more than one or two advertisements. The ten-second interval has been adopted as an informal standard for planning authorities granting consent to such digital advertisements including many of those already granted in The Northwest.

Regarding illumination, the Institute of lighting practitioners (ILP) guidance specifically considers the use of digital technology. It sets recommended maximum luminance levels per surface area which LPAs typically apply in such cases. This guidance recommends that advertisements in urbanised, well lit, areas '*should not exceed 300cd/m² at night*'. The whole street is brightly lit during the hours of darkness by high-level streetlamps.

During the daytime, the illumination will be adjusted by light sensors to make the image visible but not overly bright or dazzling in the ambient light. A correctly adjusted digital display is no more dazzling than a conventional illuminated sign. Screens operated by some other businesses, which are not properly controlled, can reflect badly on the medium. Ours will be correctly controlled using sophisticated sensors and controls. We are proud to operate our screens to the strictest of standards and we are happy for the effective use of luminance control within the guidelines, to be ensured by way of the appropriate conditions to the consent.

The display is changed remotely using mobile data control, thus removing the need for our workforce to undertake the potentially hazardous activity of posting from a ladder or elevated platform.

We are happy for the safeguards that we propose, to be included as conditions to a grant of consent (to limit the brightness of the display, prevent the display changing more than once every ten seconds, to ensure that that the change is instantaneous, and to prohibit the use of interactive messages or special effects).

There are no unusual complexities here, and the elevated position of the display ensures it would not obscure any sightlines or interfere with the clarity of the highway's infrastructure. It is therefore considered that the proposed display would not unduly distract highways users and give rise to safety issues.

Well-Being & Sustainable development

In accordance with the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 (WBFG Act). We have considered and where possible applied the well-being goals in designing this proposal.

In accordance with the sustainable development principle. The proposal meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Advertising copy will be transmitted to the unit using mobile data, eliminating the need for weekly visits to change physical posters.

Ultimately the unit can easily be removed without leaving a trace and every part of it can be recycled

We have considered the duty to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales; the advertisement is needed by the advertisers, it will contribute to the economic health of the country by stimulating commerce and to the local economy where the outdoor advertising industry employs people, pays rates to the local authority, and rent to landlords.

The digital nature of the format means that the advertisements can easily incorporate the Welsh language which is in line with the goal of facilitating a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language.

Precedent

Large Format digital displays are an established part of the street-scene that makes up the urban areas in the UK. We understand that each site will be assessed on its' own merits, but by looking at examples of where the local authority has already approved other digital signage, it helps to illustrate how favourable judgments have been made in relation to visual amenity and public safety on similar proposals. Here are some examples:

P/2021/0889 Shopping Centre Eagles Meadow

A digital 48 sheet advertisement granted

P/2021/0291 Eagles Meadow at Smithfield Road

Two 2x8 m digital advertisements approved

P/2021/0212 Counterpoint Regent Street

A digital 48 sheet advertisement refused by the local authority and allowed at appeal

P/2020/0488 Counterpoint Regent Street

A digital 48 sheet advertisement refused by the local authority and allowed at appeal

Summary and Conclusion

The proposal is consistent with the themes and objectives of the regulations, the principles of sustainable development and the well-being act goals.

The advertisement, by virtue of the siting, scale, limited illumination levels and ambient controls, would not be harmful to the street-scene or highway safety.

Should you require any additional information or if you think that there is anything else that we can add to the application to improve it, then please do not hesitate to contact me as we are very open to constructive discussion.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Spottiswood".

Tim Spottiswood

timspottiswood@outlook.com

07900 100 940

6th March 2022