

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (Control of Advertisements) REGULATIONS 1992
SECTION 78 APPEAL**

**Land at Pentre Felin, Lea Road, Wrexham
Installation of 1 x 48 sheet free standing digital advertising unit**

PLANNING REF: P/2020/0761

PINS REF: H6955/H/21/3269996

Start Date: 23/03/2021.

**Statement from R. Alun Jenkins,
Councillor representing Offa Ward on Wrexham County Borough Council
1, Maes Glas, Court Road, Wrexham. LL13 7SN**

Telephone: [REDACTED]

e-mail addresses:
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Planning Application P/2020/0761 for the *"Installation of 1 x 48 sheet free standing digital advertising display unit on land at Pentre Felin, Lea Road, Wrexham"*, was submitted on the 30th November 2020.

A very similar application was submitted in 2019 - P/2019/0942 *"for the replacement of existing 1 x 48 sheet advertisement hoarding with a 1 x 48 sheet digital display unit"*. This was refused by Wrexham County Borough Council on February 5th 2020, for the following reason:

The proposed digital advertising display unit would detract from the amenities of the area and the setting of nearby listed buildings by reason of the level of illumination, the scale of the display and the prominent location in an area of mixed residential and commercial uses. The proposal would be contrary to policies GDP1 and EC9 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan, adopted guidance note no. 1 Advertisements and Welsh Government Technical Advice Note 7 Outdoor Advertisement Control.

The Applicant appealed to the Planning Inspectorate - Appeal Ref: APP/H6955/H/20/3249418 - The appeal was dismissed - decision dated 03/06/2020 - with the Inspector concluding that *"The proposed advertisement would be harmful to the visual amenities of the area. The appeal is therefore dismissed."*

In reaching his decision, the Inspector stated:

"The proposed display unit would replace and upgrade an existing static externally illuminated advertisement hoarding. Although the proposal would be very similar in size and orientation to the existing hoarding, the overall height would be more than 0.5 metres higher. It is also my understanding that, unlike the existing, the proposal would have an internally illuminated sequential display that would show static images capable of a 10 second rotation. Although there would be no flashing or moving images within each rotation, the internal illumination and changing images would mean that the visual impact of the proposed advertisement would be substantially greater than the existing hoarding and far more prominent than the signage to commercial premises in the wider area."

"I am concerned that when seen against the green soft landscaped backdrop of the site the proposed display unit would stand out as an arbitrary and incongruous feature."

“... due to its height, scale and the frequently changing display, I am concerned that even with low luminance settings the proposed display unit would have an overstated commercial connotation which I consider would be out of keeping with its immediate setting. Additional controls over lighting levels would not therefore be enough to overcome the harm to visual amenity in this case.”

In order to overcome one of the Inspector's objections, the height of the installation in this new application has been reduced by 50cm, to the height of the current static unit. Apart from this, the only other change to the application is the inclusion of a landscaping scheme - but this will do nothing to hide the distracting and prominent nature of the flashing advertising unit.

The reasons for dismissing the previous appeal therefore remain, and the application should be rejected for the same reasons as before.

It is a major concern that the proposed flashing screen will be located along-side the Pedestrian Crossing leading directly to the entrance steps up to St Mary's Catholic Primary School. When approaching the site from Brook Street leading into Pentre Felin, the road narrows and becomes congested, with cars parked on both sides of the road for most times of day. With junctions to the right leading to Brewery Place and to Well Place, then to the left into Lea Road, drivers are much more likely to be distracted by the frequently changing pictures within the display than by the existing static display - at a time when they need to be particularly aware of the dangers to School Children. Drivers seem to already regularly ignore the a 20mph School Zone speed restriction covering this length of Pentre Felin because of the existing dangers.

The proposed advertising hoarding will also detract visually from the Grade II Listed Buildings, at the former Island Green Brewery site, and at the Old Three Tuns on the opposite side of Pentre Felin.

Whilst conditions can be applied preventing the use of the screen to display moving pictures, or to include sound, there is no doubt that the continuously changing pictures would cause great annoyance, especially during the evenings and night time to those residents living in the housing accommodation nearby.

It is disappointing that the Covid pandemic has prevented the Planning Department from determining this application within the usual timescales, but I am sure that given that there has been so little change from the previous application, this one too would have been refused permission for very similar reasons to before, and in line with the refusal last year by the Planning Inspector.

I trust that you will consider these submissions, and will be able to REFUSE planning permission for this dangerous and unacceptable proposal.

Many thanks,

R. Alun Jenkins, Councillor Offa Ward.

April 18th, 2021.