

Sheffield City Council  
The Planning Service  
Howden House  
1 Union Street  
Sheffield  
S1 2HH

15 June 2021

Dear Sir / Madam,

Please find enclosed an application for advertisement consent. This is part of a drive to modernise and upgrade advertising infrastructure to meet industry and best practice standards.

## Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007

**Update of historic advertising site to a digital advertising display: Gable at 85 (A61) Chesterfield Road, Sheffield, S8 0RN**

### The Proposal

The proposal seeks to erect a digital display at the above historic advertising site. It would be located at the north facing gable wall of no. 85 Chesterfield Road, enabling the presentation of content to highway users travelling south from the city centre towards Dronfield and Chesterfield. Advertisements would appear as static, two-dimensional, illuminated images, which update on an automated 10s sequential cycle.

The scheme will meet modern requirements of advertisers. This will bring a wide range of benefits as follows:

- Upgrade of sites lacking in investment
- Ability to broadcast emergency messaging (e.g. public health messaging)
- Ability to use void periods for non-commercial campaigns
- Opportunity for creative, real time, and locally relevant advertising
- Opportunity to integrate additional hardware to meet Smart City objectives

The Institute of Lighting Professionals best practice guidance; The Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements PLG05 2015 sets maximum limits for the illumination of digital displays at

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300cd/m<sup>2</sup> at night and 5000cd/m<sup>2</sup> during the day when set to an all-white screen. The display will be programmed to reflect these limits, however, through use of internal sensors the screen is capable of adapting to real time ambient conditions and operating at far lower levels.

### *Recommended Conditions*

The following conditions have become established as best practice for roadside digital displays. It is therefore recommended they are applied in the interests of amenity and public safety:

- Static images to be displayed only (no moving or flashing images).
- Changes between adverts to take place instantly with no, fading, swiping, or merging of images.
- Illumination shall not exceed the thresholds contained within the Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP) guidance document PLG05 – The Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements 2015.
- Advertisements to change no more frequently than once every 10 seconds.

Where circumstances demand, additional controls or variations of these conditions may be acceptable to the applicant. However, it would be expected that the Local Planning Authority present evidence based justification for deviating from the standard approach as any planning conditions imposed must meet the six tests as set out in National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG).

## Planning Policy

The legislative framework for the control of advertisements is contained within The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (the “Regulations”). Regulation 3 states that advertising should be controlled in the interest of amenity and public safety, taking into account the provisions of the development plan, in so far as they are material, in addition to any other relevant factors. The National Planning Policy Framework under paragraph 132 reiterates the need for assessment to be conducted only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts. National guidance provides further clarification and identifies that the regime for advertising consent should be a ‘lighter touch’ than the system for obtaining planning permission for development.

## The Site

The application site comprises the gable wall of no. 85 Chesterfield Road and overlooks a second-hand vehicle dealership. Adjacent to the site lies the A61 Chesterfield Road which

provides access to Sheffield's city centre for commercial, business and commuting traffic. Immediately northwest lies the Lidl supermarket, and to the west the B&M superstore. To the southwest is a tile and bathroom showroom, with further commercial units to the south. To the north are local high street shops and businesses. The wider area is largely populated with commercial and industrial buildings which ties in with the site's commercial nature. Views from street level incorporate large commercial buildings and prominent signage with Lidl supermarket dominating the immediate area. It is clear that advertising signage forms a feature of the street scene; the proposal should be easily accommodated considering its sighting and positioning.

## Planning Considerations

The site is a historic location for advertising, having supported the display of content for at least 38 years, with its first documented usage dating back to 1983, establishing the principal, and acceptance, of large format advertising as a roadside feature at the site. However, it is acknowledged by the applicant a full assessment in relation to the proposal's potential impacts upon amenity and public safety is required. These are considered in detail below.

### Amenity

Concerning amenity, it is considered the proposal would not be detrimental in either an immediate or wider sense. It falls inside a commercial district centre designation and is not within, or adjacent to any local or nationally recorded heritage assets.

The main character features of the site and surrounding area are the large commercial buildings adjacent and opposite the site, and the smaller high street businesses which align Chesterfield Road. The Chesterfield Road also forms a significant feature within the surrounding area as it is busy highway that leads directly to and from Sheffield city centre. The advertisements seen from the highway are prominent and are now familiar features to users of the highway. National guidance and advice set a presumption in favour of locating advertisements in commercial areas such as this; here, impacts are appreciably less and commensurate to the environment in which they function. In this regard, the proposal is considered acceptable.

Given the massing, prevalence, and dominance of the surrounding built form, and the presence of existing advertising when seen travelling on the Chesterfield Road, it is expected that the proposal would successfully integrate to the street scene and surrounding area. Owing to its gable wall location, the proposed display would neither appear as an isolated or standalone feature, and as single display located at a historic advertising site, it would neither contribute to clutter or negative cumulative effects.

Taking account of the internal sensors, timing clocks, and strict planning conditions that would govern the operation of the proposed display, it is considered there would be little, if any, material impact upon the site or surrounding area. Thus, the proposal would sit comfortably in its visual context without harming amenity, the qualities of the site, or the character and appearance of the wider environment.

### *Public Safety*

When assessing public safety, the key considerations are whether the location is appropriate (i.e. undemanding on the driver) and whether the level of illumination and the sequential change between advertisements is controlled to prevent distraction from the driving task. As the principle of an advertisement has been established at this location, the Council need only consider whether the proposed controls over illumination and the update of images, are sufficient to ensure that there is not an unacceptable impact on highway safety. These controls are now well established as industry standard and are therefore deemed acceptable in most instances. As such, a departure from this approach would need to be justified by site specific reasons.

The proposed display would occupy a setback position from the adjacent highway, ensuring sight lines and visibility splays are maintained. It would be seen by traffic travelling south on the A61 Chesterfield Road, which is limited to 30mph, is well lit, straight, level, and has excellent forward visibility. The straightforward and uncomplex nature of the highway at this point determines that the cognitive demand on road users would be low, enabling them to glance views of advertising content without issue or distraction. As such, drivers would be entirely capable of viewing advertisements whilst maintaining stopping distances, an awareness of surrounding traffic, and sighting of the road ahead.

Under these circumstances it is considered that the proposal would not constitute a hazardous distraction to anyone exercising a reasonable standard of care. Consequently, the proposal would not give rise to public safety issues that would prevent the granting of an express advertising consent.

## Conclusion

The proposal to upgrade the advertising site at 85 Chesterfield Road with an automated digital advertising display is unlikely to have any negative amenity or public safety impacts. The proposed display will maintain the size, position, and orientation of all previous units at the site, whilst covering an unsightly gable wall and introducing an element of modern high quality minimalist design. The proposed conditions to control the luminance and update of content will ensure that there is no additional harm to amenity. In terms of public safety, the adjacent

highway is uncomplex and allows drivers ample opportunity to glance content without losing sight of the road or traffic conditions ahead. Highway users would therefore be entirely capable of viewing content without endangering public safety.

## Application Submission

In order to complete the application, please find attached the following documentation:

- Completed Application form prepared by Wildstone;
- Letter Statement prepared by Wildstone (this letter);
- Architectural drawings prepared by Wildstone;
  - 3652\_PA\_01 Site Location Plan
  - 3652\_PA\_02 Existing Site Plan
  - 3652\_PA\_03 Proposed Site Plan
  - 3652\_PA\_04 Elevations – Existing & Proposed

Additionally, we will arrange payment to Sheffield City Council for the sum of **£462** to cover the cost of the Advertisement Consent application.

I trust that the above is clear and we look forward to receiving notification that the application has been registered in due course. Should you have any queries in relation to any of the attached information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

RP

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Planner

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