

REFERENCE NO: CR/2022/0384/ADV

LOCATION: [LAND AT HASLETT AVENUE EAST, THREE BRIDGES, CRAWLEY](#)
WARD: Three Bridges
PROPOSAL: RETROSPECTIVE ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT FOR 1 X ILLUMINATED 48-SHEET DIGITAL DISPLAY

TARGET DECISION DATE: 6 October 2022

CASE OFFICER: Miss S. Hobden

APPLICANT'S NAME: Wildstone Group Limited
AGENT'S NAME:

PLANS & DRAWINGS CONSIDERED:-

Drawing Number	Revision	Drawing Title
16486 1		Site Location Plan
16486 2		Existing Site Plan
16486 3		Proposed Site Plan
16486 4		Existing & Proposed Elevations

CONSULTEE NOTIFICATIONS & RESPONSES:-

1. Network Rail No objection
2. WSCC Advertisements No objection, subject to conditions

NEIGHBOUR NOTIFICATIONS:-

109 Hazelwick Road.

RESPONSES RECEIVED:-

One consultation response has been received. It states that the sign has been installed in a different location to that permitted in 2017, due to a conflict with underground services. The response raises concerns about why the Local Planning Authority did not foresee that the sign would conflict with underground services. It also highlights the removal of a tree from the site and questions why the Local Planning Authority did not address the felling of the tree.

REASON FOR REPORTING TO COMMITTEE:-

The application has been called in to Committee by Councillor Burgess.

THE APPLICATION SITE:-

- 1.1 The application site is located to the north of Haslett Avenue East (A220), on a grassed area between the railway lines and the vehicular access to the Snooty Fox pub. The railway is at a higher level, with the brick wall of the railway bridge crossing Haslett Avenue East situated to the east of the site. There

is also a taller signal gantry rising above the tracks. The vehicular access to the Snooty Fox runs northwards past the western boundary of the site, with the public house itself located on the opposite side of the access. There are mature trees to the north running along the railway line.

- 1.2 There is an existing digital advertisement of the size of a 48 sheet billboard on the site, which the current application seeks to retain. The existing digital advertisement is a similar height to the railway lines to the rear.
- 1.3 The application site is located within an Air Quality Management Area and Flood Zone and lies within the 10 metre railway buffer. It also lies within the Hazelwick Avenue Main Employment Area and an area of structural landscaping lies immediately to the north.

THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:-

- 2.1 Retrospective advertisement consent is sought for the retention of the existing illuminated 48 sheet digital LED display sign.
- 2.2 The sign has a total height of around 6.5 metres. The billboard area measures 3.5 metres in height and 6.3 metres in width. It displays static-coloured images without movement animation or flashing lights. The support has a height from ground to the base of the sign of 3m. The advertisements appear in colour and change every 10 seconds in one-minute sequential cycles. The advertisements are illuminated relative to ambient conditions in real time. Illumination levels fluctuate throughout the day, season and weather conditions but will not exceed 5000cd/sqm during daylight and 300cd/sqm at night.

PLANNING HISTORY:-

- 3.1 The relevant planning history is as follows:
CR/2017/0120/ADV - advertisement consent for replacement of existing 48-sheet advertising display with 48-sheet digital led display – consented.

PLANNING POLICY:-

- 4.1 Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007
- 4.2 National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

The relevant national policies include:

- Section 12 (Achieving well-designed places). Paragraph 136 states the *“quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed. A separate consent process within the planning system controls the display of advertisements, which should be operated in a way which is simple, efficient and effective. Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts.”*

- 4.3 Crawley Borough Local Plan (2015-2030) (adopted December 2015):

The relevant local policies include:

- Policy CH3 (Normal Requirements of All Development) - proposals must adhere to any relevant supplementary planning guidance produced by the Council, including advice on signs and advertisements.

4.4 Urban Design Supplementary Planning Document (adopted October 2016):

The Urban Design SPD is a non-statutory document which supplements the policies of the Local Plan and is applicable to this application. It contains guidelines on the standards the Council expects for the public design and the advertisements and signs. In particular, it states that:

- *Advertising and signs should not impact the visual amenity of the surrounding area and should not pose any danger to highway safety.*
- *Freestanding signs should not obstruct the highway and should be user friendly.*
- *Proposals for illuminated signs will not be acceptable where the illumination will be detrimental to the amenity of the area, or intrusive to any adjoining residential areas or properties:*
- *Intermittent (flashing) signs will not be acceptable as they create a distraction to drivers.*
- *Illuminated signs will normally be restricted to fascias and projecting signs and should not conflict with the operation of the highway.*

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:-

5.1 The main planning issues in the determination of this application are:

- Amenity of the area
- Public safety and highways
- Other matters

Amenity of the area

- 5.2 In 2017, consent (CR/2017/0120/ADV) was given for a 48-sheet digital LED display sign in a similar location. However, the sign installed has a central steel support column rather than the full width base shown on the drawings that were approved. It is also located slightly differently on the site, being slightly further away from Haslett Avenue East and angled differently. Retrospective consent is sought to retain the sign as installed. Given the general similarities between the approved sign and the one installed, it is considered that the principle of a sign of this type in this location has already been established.
- 5.3 The site is located close to a busy four lane road (A220 Haslett Avenue East), with traffic lights controlling access to Three Bridges station nearby. The higher-level railway bridge provides a backdrop to the sign when seen from the west. There is a further advertisement board under the bridge and a number of signs on the railway station building, taxi office and off-licence. There are a number of small scale signs on and around the Snooty Fox public house. This part of the A220 is characterised by commercial uses, including retail buildings, the railway station and the adjacent pub. It forms a busy route for traffic and a public transport interchange. The advertisement is seen within this busy context, with the background of the railway line and a number of mature trees to the north.
- 5.4 The nearest residential property is located on the eastern side of the railway bridge, some distance from the application site, and has no direct view of the sign.
- 5.5 The application seeks advertisement consent for the existing digital LED display advertisement. The digital LED advertisement is a total of 3.3 metres in height (total height 6.3 metres including support column) and 6.3 metres in width. It displays static images without movement animation or flashing lights. The advertisement changes every 10 seconds in one-minute sequential cycles. This equates to 6 adverts per minute, which are repeated. The luminance levels do not exceed 5000cd/sqm during the daytime and 300cd/sqm at night. This is within the maximum luminance level as recommended

by the Institute of Lighting Engineers for Crawley (Zone 3) which states that the maximum daytime luminance level should not exceed 5000 cd/sqm and during the hours of darkness 300cd/sqm for signs over 10sqm. The surrounding area is relatively brightly lit, with a number of existing streetlights nearby and Three Bridges railway station opposite. The station platforms are lit and extend to cross the railway bridge close to the application site. Although the sign is illuminated and sizable, it is considered acceptable given the surrounding well lit, busy urban environment.

- 5.6 Prior to the installation of the sign, there was a mature tree on the site, with a height greater than the adjoining railway line. The tree was removed around the time that the digital sign was installed. The tree was not covered by a Tree Preservation Order and consent was not required for its removal. The consultation response raises concerns about the loss of the tree. Unfortunately, it was not clear from the submitted drawings that the tree would be removed. In any case, the sign was not implemented in accordance with the approved permission (CR/2017/0120/FUL). The sign on site is of a different design and in a different location to that approved. Apparently its relocated site was caused by the position of underground services. However, planning officers had no way of knowing this at the time of the 2017 application. The applicant is seeking to regularise the existing sign through the current application. The loss of the tree was both unfortunate and regrettable, but it was not covered by a Tree Preservation Order and there were no controls over its removal.
- 5.7 Overall, the siting and size of the sign is considered acceptable, given the busy urban character, the existing lighting in the area, the distance from residential properties and the acceptability of the proposed illumination levels. As such, it is considered that the sign does not have a detrimental impact on the visual amenity of the area.

Public safety and highways

- 5.8 In terms of safety, the sign has been assessed against the standing advice on illuminated signs and adverts provided by West Sussex County Council's Highways team. The standing advice provides local planning authorities with the necessary guidance to assess the transport implications of adverts. The guidance addresses the following points:

Is any of the proposed signage within the publicly maintainable highway?

No, the sign is not located within the publicly maintainable highway.

Does the proposed signage exceed recommended maximum luminance levels?

No, the sign does not exceed maximum luminance levels

Is the proposed signage located within a visibility splay?

No, the sign is not located within a visibility splay.

Is the proposed signage likely to cause a distraction to motorists?

The sign is located along the A220, a busy road at this point, with traffic moving east/west and also in/out of Three Bridges Station. The sign is visible to pedestrians and also people in vehicles travelling east towards Pound Hill and vehicles turning into or out of Three Bridges Station. The sign is illuminated and has a moving display. WSCC Highways has been consulted and commented that the sign is located on private land and is not in a position which would obstruct vehicular visibility at the access point with the A220. Furthermore, the sign does not exceed the maximum luminance level as recommended by the Institute of Lighting Engineers for Crawley (Zone 3). WSCC Highways therefore does not raise any objection to retention of the existing sign.

Does the proposed signage overhang the publicly maintainable highway?

No, the sign does not overhang the publicly maintainable highway.

Other matters

- 5.9 The application site is located close to the railway line and within the ten-metre buffer. Network Rail were consulted on the application and have raised no objection to the retention of the existing sign.

CONCLUSIONS:-

- 6.1 It is considered that the size, siting and illumination of the existing digital LED display sign is acceptable in this location and does not have an adverse impact on the visual amenity of the surrounding area or cause a danger or hazard to public safety. Therefore, the sign is in accordance with the Crawley Borough Local Plan, the Urban Design SPD and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF.

RECOMMENDATION RE: CR/2022/0384/ADV:-

CONSENT subject to the following conditions:

1. A. No advertisement is to be displayed without the permission of the owner of the site or any other person with an interest in the site entitled to grant permission.

B. No advertisement shall be sited or displayed so as to-
(i) endanger persons using any highway, railway, waterway, dock, harbour or aerodrome (civil or military);
(ii) obscure, or hinder the ready interpretation of, any traffic sign, railway signal or aid to navigation by water or air; or
(iii) hinder the operation of any device used for the purpose of security or surveillance or for measuring the speed of any vehicle.

C. Any advertisement displayed, and any site used for the display of advertisements, shall be maintained in a condition that does not impair the visual amenity of the site.

D. Any structure or hoarding erected or used principally for the purpose of displaying advertisements shall be maintained in a condition that does not endanger the public.

E. Where an advertisement is required under these regulations to be removed, the site shall be left in a condition that does not endanger the public or impair visual amenity.

REASONS: (A) to (E) - To comply with Schedule 2 of the Town & Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007.

2. The intensity of the illumination of the signs shall not exceed 300cd/sqm during the hours of darkness or 5000cd/sqm during daylight hours.
REASONS: In the interests of the visual amenities of the locality and road safety in compliance with policy CH3 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015-2030 and the Urban Design Supplementary Planning Document.
3. Any change in the advertisement shall be instantaneous and the sign shall not display any moving images.
REASONS: In the interests of the visual amenities of the locality and road safety in compliance with policy CH3 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015-2030 and the Urban Design Supplementary Planning Document.
4. The advertisement being displayed on the sign shall not change more than once every 5 seconds.
REASONS: In the interests of the visual amenities of the locality and road safety in compliance with policy CH3 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015-2030 and the Urban Design Supplementary Planning Document.



ArcGIS Web Map



Crawley Borough Council
Town Hall, The Boulevard,
Crawley, West Sussex,
RH10 1UZ
Tel: 01293 438000

1:1,000

