PLANNING STATEMENT

APPLICATION FOR EXPRESS CONSENT: TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (CONTROL OF ADVERTISEMENTS) (ENGLAND) REGULATIONS 2007

Submitted via Planning Portal - PP-09214560

Dear Sir/Madam

ADVERTISEMENT DISPLAY: Land at Saint Mary's Gate at the corner of Union Street Rochdale OL16 1DY

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

"The replacement of a freestanding 12x3m and a freestanding 6x3m advertising hoarding with a single 6x3m digital LED advertising unit"

The application comprises the following documents and drawings:

- RSMGUS Location plan
- RSMGUS Site plan
- RSMGUS Specification drawing
- This Planning Statement
- Photograph and Photomontage

Site description

The site currently consists of two conventional paper and paste advertising hoardings. To the left is a 96 sheet (12x3m) and to the right is a 48 sheet (6x3m). Together they form part of the perimeter of a car park which is accessed from Hunters lane at the rear.

The advertisement was originally granted express consent by the authority and now enjoys deemed consent under class 13, schedule 3 of the regulations.

The advertisements are viewed by traffic travelling along Saint Mary's way in a Westerly direction.

The area is overwhelmingly commercial, dominated by the highway's infrastructure, and business premises including the large retail sheds of United Carpets on the same side of the road and the giant Dunelm retail unit opposite the site. The advertisements are at the edge of the city centre facing out on to the highway

which is part of the main orbital route around the town centre and is classified as the A58 trunk road.

Current View facing traffic heading along Saint Mary's Gate in a Westerly direction



Proposed display

This proposed scheme seeks to replace both existing advertisements with a single freestanding LED screen, housed in a box-frame and mounted on two steel uprights enclosed in cladding to create the impression of a single support piece. The new display will continue the function of advertising to vehicular traffic approaching the site along Saint Mary's gate in a westerly direction.

The screen will show each advertisement for a minimum display time of 10 seconds. They will not include interactive advertisements, motion, or special effects of any kind. The interval between successive displays will be by way of a smooth fade and there will be a mechanism to freeze or switch off the image in the event of a malfunction.

Proposed View facing traffic heading along Saint Mary's Gate in a Westerly direction



Grounds for Approval

Amenity

The Regulations, National Planning Policy Framework, and Planning Practice Guidance require that decisions relating to advertisements are made only in the interests of amenity and public safety. Local policies are material considerations but not decisive factors. They state that a local planning authority should consider the local characteristics of the area. They also make clear that advertisements are less likely to pose an issue if they are within a commercial locality.

Saint Mary's gate is a highly traversed and well-lit roadway meaning that the ambient effect of the proposal is sufficiently contained, in accordance with the guidance set out by the Institute of Lighting Practitioners (ILP) which I will detail in the following section on safety.

The proposed digital displays will be more modern in appearance than the existing display and the existing advertisements will be replaced with a single advertising display, reducing the area given over to advertisements by a third. The removal of the larger 12x6m hoarding, will open views into the town centre, which are currently obscured by the advertisements. The proposed layout will be an enhancement, delivering a single, uncluttered, dynamic display unit capable of serving multiple advertisers sequentially.

An application by this company for two similarly sized digital screens overlooking St. Mary's Gate nearby was refused in September 2019. An appeal against the decision was subsequently dismissed. (application Ref 19/01093/ADV).

This application has been designed to address the issues raised by that refusal by relocating the proposal to a less sensitive position 80 metres to the west.

The reason for the refusal was given that the proposal would cause 'less than substantial harm' to designated heritage assets, St Mary's Ukrainian Church at 20 East Gate Street and a couple of derelict Georgian buildings at 1 & 3 Whitehall Street.

This new application is at the very edge of the conservation area and faces out of it towards the highway. The impact of the advertisement lies outside of the conservation area and It is not seen within the context of the buildings on Whitehall Street or the Ukrainian Church.

This new proposal exceeds the statutory requirement for developments within a conservation area, 'to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area', by reducing the size of the advertisements and by opening up the views into the area through the reduction in capacity.

Public Safety

National planning guidance suggests that static digital advertising is likely to be acceptable in locations where static advertising exists or would be accepted. Digital displays are now commonplace in the main urban areas of the country and they have been shown to be no more distracting than other forms of advertisement.

This location has been in advertising use without complaint for many years and changes in the format of the display are not likely to be so distracting that they

create a hazard to, or endanger, people in the vicinity who are taking reasonable care for their own and others' safety.

The screen has been designed with the relevant highway design standards in mind. There will be a clear, visibility splay of at least 50m. The screen will not come as a surprise to oncoming drivers. This section of highway is wide and clear.

The site is not close to any light-controlled junctions or pedestrian crossings and there is an exceptionally long history of the use of the site for illuminated advertisement display, without it having a record of causing distraction or accidents.

The units 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.

Turning to 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/m^2 at night*'. 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.

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.

Sustainable development

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

The advertisement is clearly needed by the advertisers, it contributes 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 applicant is based in Greater Manchester and employs people living in Greater Manchester. We are a regional company and much more of our advertising is for

local businesses as opposed to the national corporate advertisers that the major outdoor media companies attract.

The conversion to digital will enable us to save hundreds of vehicle miles each year, since the 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

Summary and Conclusion

This application seeks express consent for the upgrading of the current display to incorporate a modern digital display screen. There is a clear and established precedent of the use at the site for illuminated advertisements. The proposed scheme is clearer and simpler than the existing one and as such is not considered to detrimentally impact either public safety or amenity. The proposals are consistent with the themes and objectives of the NPPF and the principles of sustainable development.

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

Yours faithfully,



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