



Highway Safety Assessment

147 Yorkshire Street, Rochdale, Advertising Site

Wildstone Estates Limited

Prepared by:

SLR Consulting Limited

SLR Project No.: 415.065671.00001

Client Reference No: 415.065671.00001

3 June 2026

Revision: A

Introduction & Context

- 1.1 SLR has been commissioned by Wildstone Estates Limited (the applicant) to prepare a Highway Safety Assessment to support an advertising application in relation to the proposal for the erection of one digital advertising display (D48 display, measuring 6m x 3m) on the gable end of 147 Yorkshire Street, Rochdale, OL12 0DR.
- 1.2 This application has been submitted (*live application reference number: PL/2026/0356*) for a D48 digital display at the above location. The application currently has an objection from Highways, who make the following comment:

The application site is on the edge of Rochdale Town Centre area a short distance from the Townhead junction which is extremely busy. Advertisements by their nature and design are distracting. Advertisements must not be sighted at a location where drivers need to full concentrate such as the busy Townhead junction. We are happy the advertisement is sufficiently far enough from the junction not to be problematic we do however have concerns about the proximity of the pedestrian crossing which comes is situated at the very location this advertisement comes into view.

- 1.3 On review of the current objection and highway comment, Highway officers are happy with the site's proximity to the adjacent junction, which is located significantly downstream from the proposed display, however the area of concern relates to the signal-controlled pedestrian crossing on Yorkshire Street, which is located near the digital display location. This document therefore reviews the comments received and undertakes an assessment of the current highway comment / concern relating to the pedestrian crossing.
- 1.4 It is notable that the comments provide limited supporting evidence or detailed justification for their assertions. No specific reference is made to accident data, recorded collision trends, sightline issues, or other quantifiable safety factors. In the absence of such evidence, it is necessary to critically review the basis of the comments, compare them with empirical data and consider whether the concerns raised are substantiated by evidence.
- 1.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) should also be a material consideration, with paragraph 116 stating that:

Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.

- 1.6 The overarching policy requirement is to ensure that the digital display does not adversely or unacceptably affect public / highway safety. Development also needs to ensure that suitable mitigation is provided. This will be assessed within this report.
- 1.7 In light of the above, this Highway Safety Assessment has been prepared to assess the highway safety concerns about the proximity of the nearby pedestrian crossing.



Site Location

- 1.8 The site is located on the gable end of 147 Yorkshire Street and will face in a south westerly direction towards northeast bound traffic on Yorkshire Street. The proposed single-sided digital display will measure 6m x 3m and will be elevated 4.85m above ground level.
- 1.9 The location of the proposed screen is illustrated in **Figure 1** below, with the site plans presented as **Appendix A**, to the rear of this report.

Figure 1 – Site Location



Existing Research: Digital Displays & Accident Risk

- 1.10 A piece of research by Jacobs (formerly CH2M Hill) was undertaken in 2014, which analysed five sites in Greater London in relation to the historical safety impact of roadside digital advertising installations. The piece of research looked at the following sites across Greater London:
- M4 The Torch, M4, Hounslow – (Operational from 1st April 2006);
 - Westfield, Holland Park Roundabout, Hammersmith and Fulham – (Operational from 1st April 2008);
 - M4 Silver Screen, M4, Hounslow – (Operational from 1st April 2009);



- Hammersmith Broadway, Hammersmith Road, Hammersmith and Fulham – (Operational from 1st April 2009); and
- Two Towers, A4, Hammersmith and Fulham – (Operational from 1st April 2011).

- 1.11 The results of the research indicated that there was no statistical relationship between digital advertising and increased accident rates and that an average reduction of 20% of accidents was observed across the five sites following the erection of the displays. Overall, across the five digital display advertisement sites that were analysed, the annual collision rate had been shown to have decreased from 4.0 to 3.2 collisions per year.
- 1.12 In 2016, CEDR, with the UK as a funded partner, conducted research to examine the safety effects of digital roadside advertisements. The study analysed several field studies where drivers followed a fixed route with multiple digital billboards while wearing a non-intrusive eye tracker. The findings concluded that digital advertising did not lead to 'unacceptably long glances away from the road' and could not be considered a significant distraction, suggesting that digital billboards do not compromise driver attention or road safety.
- 1.13 Therefore, when evaluating this application, it is important to recognise that existing research exists to support digital displays safe implementation, and there is evidence to show that they do not inherently pose a highway safety risk or distraction to road users.

Context to Advertising Controls

- 1.14 The TfL document 'Guidance for Digital Roadside Advertising and Proposed Best Practice' (2013) is UK and England specific guidance and provides advice regarding the acceptable form of, or location for, digital roadside advertising. The guidance acknowledges that there is no demonstrable proof that advertisements cause traffic collisions or are inherently unsafe. It recognises that static digital advertising is likely to be acceptable in locations where static advertising exists or would be accepted. It also concludes that with the use of appropriate controls, digital advertising should be no more or less acceptable than traditional forms of advertising such as poster and paste.
- 1.15 It is considered that the guidance document provides a good framework for assessing the suitability of sites for digital roadside advertising throughout the UK. It is fully endorsed by TfL, and this document is applied by London Boroughs as well as TfL. It is also important to note that the presence of digital advertising displays adjacent to principal routes in urban areas is increasingly commonplace in the UK in terms of them being part of the roadside environment that drivers are familiar with assimilating.
- 1.16 With the use of appropriate controls, digital advertising should be no more or less acceptable than traditional forms of advertising such as poster and paste and it is possible to control the type, brightness, rate of change and interval between advertisements.

Controlled Operation

- 1.17 'The Institute of Lighting Professionals Guidance Technical Note 5: Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements (2023)', acknowledges that digital advertisements are highly controllable and concludes that with the use of appropriate controls, digital advertising should be no more or



less acceptable than traditional forms of advertising such as poster and paste formats. These appropriate controls are as follows to ensure that the level of luminance from the proposed digital advertising display will not have an unacceptable impact in terms of driver distraction and on public safety:

- Display of static information;
- No intermittent light sources, flashing lights, moving parts or features, exposed cold cathode tubing, animation or retroreflective material;
- Will not imitate traffic signals or alike;
- Illumination in a manner reasonably required to fulfil the purpose of the advertisement; and
- Maximum permitted luminance level of 300cd/m² at nighttime (for illuminated area over 10m²) and increased to 5,000cd/m² during daytime to ensure advertisements remain visible during all conditions (e.g. bright sunlight). Light sensors and other display controls will be used to control the lighting output to within acceptable limits and to reflect the local approach to street lighting.

Proposed Planning Conditions / Controls

1.18 In light of the above, the following planning conditions are proposed by the applicant to control the operation of the digital advertising display to ensure that the screen operates in a safe manner:

- The display will be controlled by conditions in accordance with the Institution of Lighting Professionals 'Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements' (2015) guidance, with nighttime luminance limited to 300cd/m²;
- Daytime illumination levels of the proposal will adjust according to the ambient light during all conditions (e.g. low light, direct sunlight);
- The advertising screen shall not display any moving, or apparently moving images;
- The sequential advertisements shall not change more than once every 10 seconds, which is the commonly established industry standard; and
- Any sequential change between advertisements will take place over a period no greater than one second, unless otherwise agreed with the Local Authority.

1.19 The proposed digital advertising display has been designed and will be operated in accordance with established UK best practice and recognised technical guidance. Through the implementation of strict controls on luminance and transition effects, the display will function in a predictable and non-intrusive manner within the roadside environment.

1.20 Accordingly, the operational characteristics of the proposal ensure that the display will not result in undue driver distraction, glare, or interference with safety-critical highway features, and is therefore considered acceptable in highway safety terms.

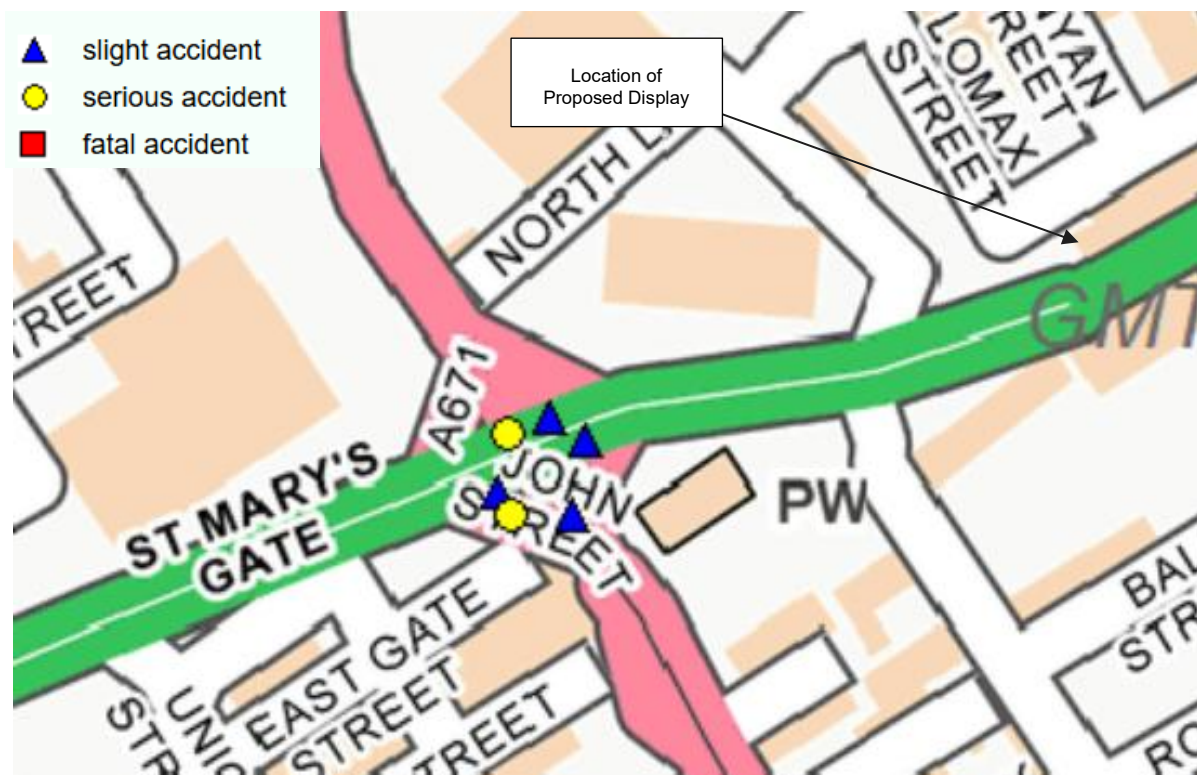


- 1.21 It should be noted that digital advertising is now widespread across the UK. The proposed advertising controls are considered appropriate and consistent with those applied to other digital displays operating on / adjacent to highway environments nationwide which operate with no concerns.

Review of Local Collision Record

- 1.22 To assess whether the proposed digital advertising screen could present a potential safety concern, Personal Injury Collision (PIC) data for the latest available five-year period (up to 30th June 2025) has been reviewed from the Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) accident database.
- 1.23 The data indicates that only six collisions have occurred at the downstream Whitworth Road / St Mary's Gate / John Street signalised junction during this period. This level of recorded collisions is considered low for a junction of this nature, and the junction is located a considerable distance from the proposed display, that the display would not be in view from this junction location. Importantly, the data confirms that no collisions have occurred at, or in the vicinity of the pedestrian crossing referenced within the Highway comments during the same most recent five-year period.
- 1.24 The collision analysis demonstrates that the surrounding highway network operates safely and is straightforward for drivers to navigate. Accordingly, the proposed location is considered suitable for the introduction of a digital advertising screen, with no evidence to indicate that it would adversely affect road safety in the vicinity of the application site.

Figure 2 – Collision Data Output File (Source: TfGM)



Site Specific Highway Safety Assessment

- 1.25 The proposed digital display is situated on the northern side of Yorkshire Street and will primarily be viewed by northeast bound traffic travelling along Yorkshire Street. Due to the orientation of the display on the gable end, westbound traffic will not have view of the proposed display.
- 1.26 Approximately 40m to the west of the application site is a push-button controlled pedestrian crossing, which serves a pedestrian desire line across Yorkshire Street.
- 1.27 The crossing is acknowledged as a key consideration and concern raised by the Council and therefore forms the principal focus of this assessment. In response, this report considers the relationship between the proposed display and the crossing itself, alongside broader considerations.

Assessment of Relationship with Pedestrian Crossing

- 1.28 As discussed, approximately 40m to the west of the proposed display is a push-button controlled pedestrian crossing across Yorkshire Street.
- 1.29 On approach to the pedestrian crossing, the carriageway comprises a single lane arrangement, with an unopposed right-turn lane onto George Street located downstream of the crossing. The simplicity of the highway layout results in a low-complexity driving environment, reducing potential driver workload and conflict points on approach to the crossing and around the proposed display.
- 1.30 In accordance with Department for Transport Circular 01/2023 and recognised guidance relating to outdoor advertising and public safety, digital advertising is not inherently unsafe, but can be unsafe when the display interferes with critical highway infrastructure such as traffic signals. Therefore, a detailed visual and operational assessment has been undertaken to establish whether the proposed display could give rise to driver distraction, interfere with signal recognition, or otherwise prejudice the safe operation of the pedestrian crossing.
- 1.31 The assessment has specifically considered the interaction between the proposed display and the pedestrian crossing signals from a distance of 43m in advance of the crossing stop line. This reflects the Stopping Sight Distance (SSD) associated with a 30mph road environment in accordance with Manual for Streets and represents the critical decision-making location at which drivers identify and respond to the traffic signals.
- 1.32 As shown on **Drawing D100** overleaf, there is clear physical and visual separation between the proposed digital display and the pedestrian crossing signal heads. The display sits outside the direct focal area of the traffic signals for drivers and cannot reasonably be mistaken for signal equipment or compete visually with the signal heads that control the crossing. Drivers approaching the crossing will retain uninterrupted visibility of the signal heads, stop line, crossing infrastructure, and waiting pedestrians and therefore there is no conflict with this existing highway infrastructure and the proposed display location.



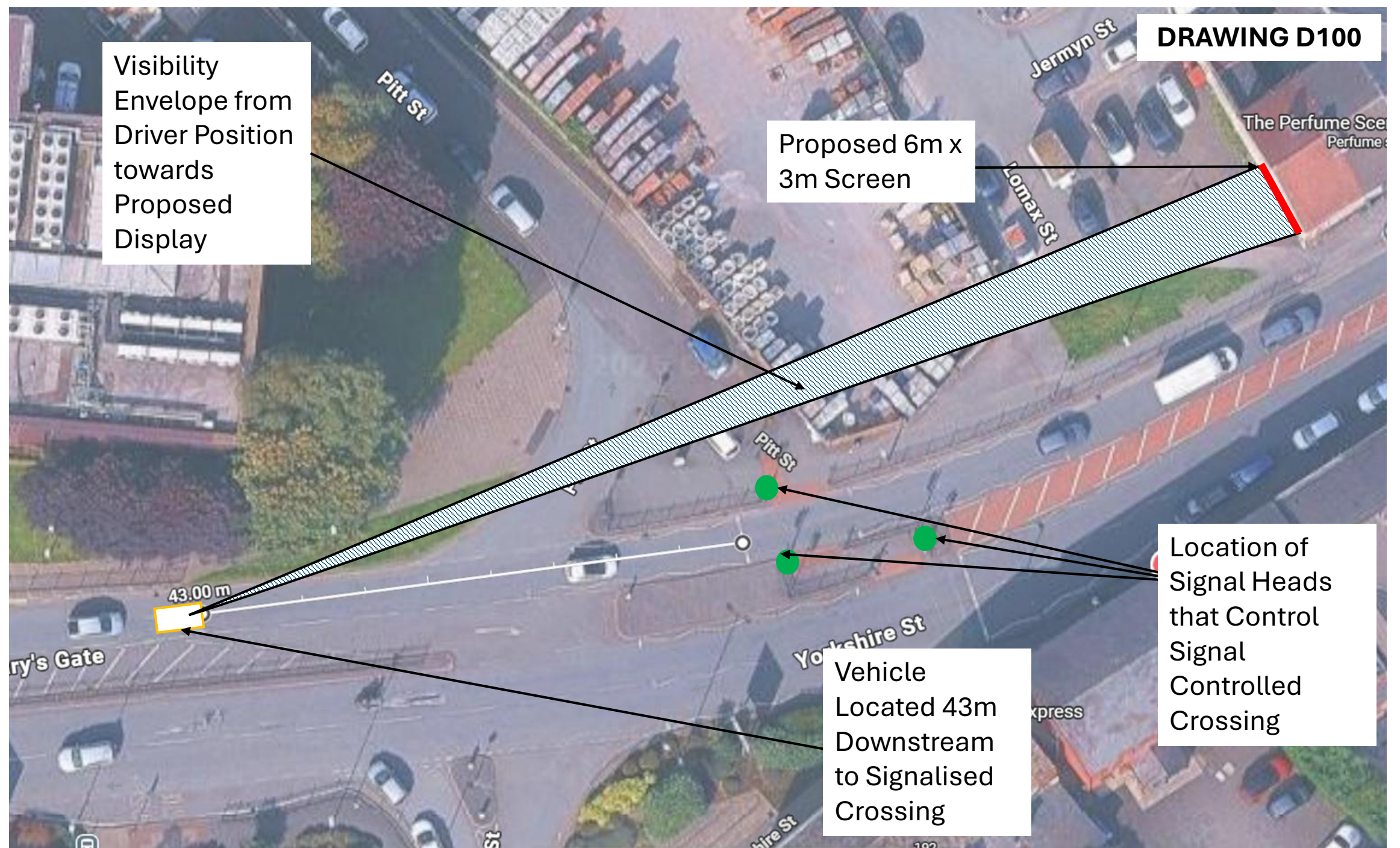
DRAWING D100

Visibility
Envelope from
Driver Position
towards
Proposed
Display

Proposed 6m x
3m Screen

Location of
Signal Heads
that Control
Signal
Controlled
Crossing

Vehicle
Located 43m
Downstream
to Signalised
Crossing



- 1.33 In addition, the existing signal heads are fitted with standard backing boards, which effectively isolate their illuminated aspects from any potential light emitted by the digital display. This design feature further ensures that the proposed screen cannot cause confusion, glare, or distraction that would impact signal visibility.
- 1.34 The pedestrian environment surrounding the site is well developed, with continuous footways and established desire lines extending in all four directions. Owing to the proposed display's elevated mounting height (approximately 4.85m above ground level) and fixed orientation, there is no potential for visual interference or confusion with the pedestrian / cycle signal indicators (green / red person signals) that are located lower than eye height on the signal poles for waiting pedestrians to respond to.
- 1.35 In addition, controlled crossings inherently promote pedestrian safety through managed, signalised movements that separate pedestrian and vehicular phases. The operation of these facilities will remain unchanged by the proposal.
- 1.36 It is also important to recognise that digital advertising displays are now a well-established and commonplace component of urban roadside environments throughout the UK, including in locations immediately adjacent to signalised junctions, pedestrian crossings, and significantly more complex highway layouts. Drivers are therefore familiar with this form of advertising infrastructure and do not encounter such displays as unusual or unexpected features.
- 1.37 The display will also operate subject to industry-standard controls relating to luminance, dwell time, and image transition. Advertisements will remain static between transitions, with no scrolling, flashing, rapid sequencing, or moving imagery proposed. These operational controls are specifically intended to minimise distraction and are accepted by local planning and highway authorities nationwide.
- 1.38 Overall, the assessment demonstrates that there will be no interaction between the proposed display and the nearby pedestrian crossing. Drivers approaching the crossing will continue to benefit from clear visibility of all highway infrastructure and signal equipment from the critical decision-making distance, and the proposal will not affect the safe operation of the crossing or wider highway network.

Assessment Against Policy

- 1.39 The overarching policy criteria for advertising and public safety, is to ensure that the screen does not create a harmful effect on road safety or levels of distraction.
- 1.40 The assessment contained within this report demonstrates that the proposed display has been carefully positioned and designed to fully accord with these objectives. The proposal maintains clear visual separation from traffic signals, preserves visibility of all highway infrastructure, and incorporates recognised operational controls to ensure safe operation.
- 1.41 There is no technical evidence to indicate that the proposed display would impair driver concentration, increase collision risk, reduce pedestrian safety, or adversely affect the operation of the nearby crossing.
- 1.42 It is also material that the surrounding environment already contains a range of urban visual stimuli typically associated with a town centre corridor, including highway signage and



commercial frontages. In this context, the proposed display would integrate naturally within the established character of the area and would not appear visually dominant or out of place.

- 1.43 Therefore, there are no transport or highway safety grounds to withhold planning permission for this development as the effects can in no way be considered 'severe'.

Consented Comparable Sites

- 1.44 Advertisements are now a common sight and as such, are not an 'unusual' or 'surprising' distraction for drivers. This section provides examples of other sites where digital advertising displays have been introduced and approved in similar highway environments, in the vicinity of signal-controlled pedestrian crossings and close to junctions.

SITE LOCATION	IMAGE (SOURCE: GOOGLE STREETVIEW / PLANNING)
289 Chorley Road, Salford This advertising application (<i>Salford City Council application reference 20/76280/ADV</i>) relates to a D48 digital advertising screen located on the gable end of a hot food takeaway. The site is located in proximity to a signal-controlled pedestrian crossing The application was granted permission in January 2021 with the local highway authority concluding that the proposed digital display would have no over sailing issue to the public highway nor safety: <i>"The proposed sign is fixed to the side elevation of the building and has no over sailing issue to the highway. The advertisement would not cause any pedestrian obstruction as the sign would not be on a pedestrian walkway.</i> <i>The installation of the fascia sign will be on the side of the building on Sutherland Street visible from Chorley Road, with the proposed electronic sign having a luminance of 300cd/m2 and an area of 18m2 which is within the accepted limit of luminance levels of a maximum of 300 cd/m2 for signage larger than 10m2. This has been reviewed by Salford City Councils highways team who have confirmed it is an acceptable level of illuminance to ensure the sign does not appear too bright/ cause a distraction for drivers. A condition has been recommended to secure the level of illuminance".</i>	 The image is an aerial view from Google Street View showing the intersection of Chorley Road and Sutherland Street. A white arrow points to a building on Sutherland Street, with a label 'Digital Display Location' pointing to its side elevation. The building is a hot food takeaway. The surrounding area includes residential houses and other commercial buildings.



705 – 707 Oldham Road, Rochdale

This advertising application (*Rochdale Borough Council advertising application reference 19/01282/ADV*) sought advertising consent to support a digital LED display at 705-707 Oldham Road. The site is located immediately downstream to a push button signal controlled crossing.

The local highway authority had no objections regarding this proposal and the advertising application was granted permission in January 2020 and installed during 2021.

A review of personal injury collision data has been undertaken for the road network surrounding the proposed advertising display to identify any change in accident trends before and after the installation of the screen, where it would have been visible to drivers. The analysis compares collision frequencies in the years preceding installation with those recorded in the subsequent years. The results of this assessment are summarised in the Table below.

	Pre-Screen	Post-Screen
	January 2019 – December 2021	January 2022 – December 2024
Total	1	1

The review of recent accident data does not demonstrate any upward trend in accidents since the erection of the advertising display at this location in the three years after its implementation.

Therefore, it is not considered that the subsequent permission to display a digital advertising display at this location, has in no way resulted in any negative impact on the local highway network.



Fratton Station Entrance, Fratton, Portsmouth

This approved digital advertising application is situated in proximity to the main pedestrian entrance into Fratton Station and located in an offside position, just downstream from a busy signal-controlled pedestrian crossing.

This application was approved by Portsmouth City Council in April 2022 (planning application: 22/00316/ADV).



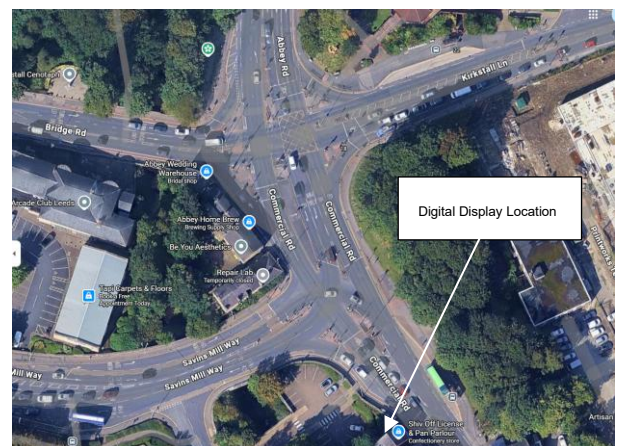
38 Commercial Road, Leeds

This advertising application (19/00843/ADV) sought consent for the replacement of a 48 sheet static advertisements with one digital LED display of the same size. The proposed digital advertising display is in the background of the signalised junction of Commercial Road and Savins Mill Way heading into Leeds City Centre and has a long sightline towards the proposed screen. The junction has numerous pedestrian / cycle crossings that are signal controlled.

The Council originally refused the planning application, raising concerns that the digital display will distract drivers who are approaching the traffic lights and signalised junction. They also stated that the location is next to a high trafficked junction set with a number of intersecting lanes and various well used crisscrossing pedestrian routes which gives a highly complex arrangement where distractions can further negatively affect driver attention from what is a very busy tight configuration of road systems linking the A65 and B6157 roads.

However, this advertising application was successful on appeal, with the inspector concluding the following:

'Whilst the proposal would be illuminated and include sequentially changing adverts, there is no



substantive evidence before me, on why in this instance, the digital advertisement proposed would be distracting to the point of creating a hazard'

- 1.57 It has been shown that there are examples of digital advertising displays which are similar in location, that have gained planning permission and are operational with no concern for highway safety.

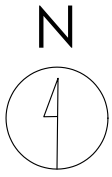
Report Conclusions

- 1.58 This Highway Safety Assessment has been prepared to review the concerns raised by the Local Highway Authority regarding the proximity of the proposed digital advertising display to the nearby signal-controlled pedestrian crossing on Yorkshire Street.
- 1.59 The assessment demonstrates that the proposed display will not adversely affect the safe operation of the pedestrian crossing or surrounding highway network. There is clear visual separation between the display and the crossing signal heads, meaning the advertisement cannot be confused with traffic signals or interfere with driver visibility.
- 1.60 The surrounding highway environment is relatively simple, with clear forward visibility, limited conflict points, and a 30mph speed limit. Drivers approaching the crossing will continue to have clear visibility of the crossing, signals, and surrounding highway infrastructure.
- 1.61 The display will also operate subject to standard industry controls relating to luminance, dwell time, and advertisement transitions. The screen will display static images only, with no flashing, scrolling, or moving content proposed.
- 1.62 A review of the most recent five-year collision data confirms that there have been no recorded injury collisions at the nearby pedestrian crossing. Existing research and guidance also show that appropriately controlled digital advertising displays do not inherently create highway safety concerns.
- 1.63 In addition, there are numerous examples of similar digital advertising displays operating safely near pedestrian crossings and signal-controlled junctions across the UK, including within Rochdale.
- 1.64 The National Planning Policy Framework, Paragraph 116 (December 2024) states that, 'Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.'
- 1.65 In conclusion, there is no evidence to suggest that the proposed display would result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the operation of the surrounding road network. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in highway safety terms as the effects can in no way be considered severe.



Appendix A – Proposed Site Plans





Crown copyright and database rights (2026) OS (100063368)

Title
Site Location Plan

Address
147 Yorkshire Street, Rochdale, OL12
ODR, UK

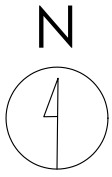
Client

Job No. 27230
Issued 31/03/26

Scale
1:1250 @ A3

Key
1. Site Boundary

All information is to be checked on site for accuracy and fit. Only drawings with WD status with the most recent revision are to be used for construction.



Crown copyright and database rights (2026) OS (100063368)

0 20m 40m

Title
Existing Site Plan

Address
147 Yorkshire Street, Rochdale, OL12
ODR, UK

Client

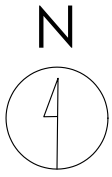
Job No.
27230

Issued
31/03/26

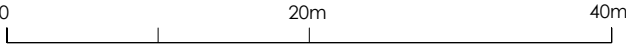
Scale
1:500 @ A3

Key
1. Site Boundary

All information is to be checked on site for accuracy and fit. Only drawings with WD status with the most recent revision are to be used for construction.



Crown copyright and database rights (2026) OS (100063368)



Title
Proposed Site Plan

Address
147 Yorkshire Street, Rochdale, OL12
ODR, UK

Client

Job No. 27230
Issued 31/03/26

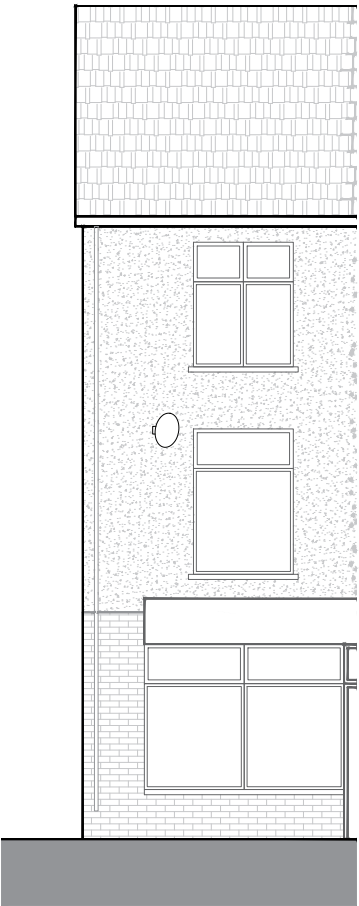
Scale
1:500 @ A3

Key
1. Site Boundary
2. Proposed Digital Display

All information is to be checked on site for accuracy and fit. Only drawings with WD status with the most recent revision are to be used for construction.

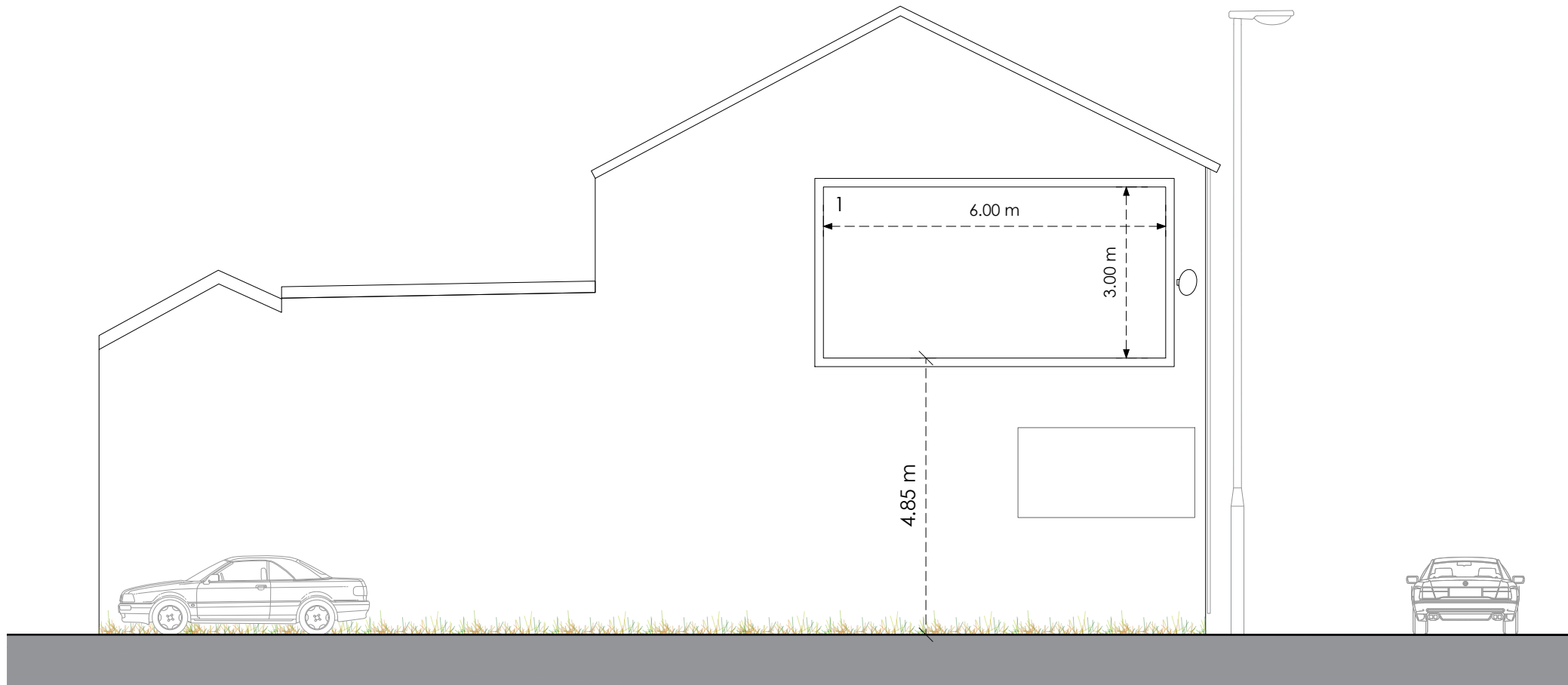


Front



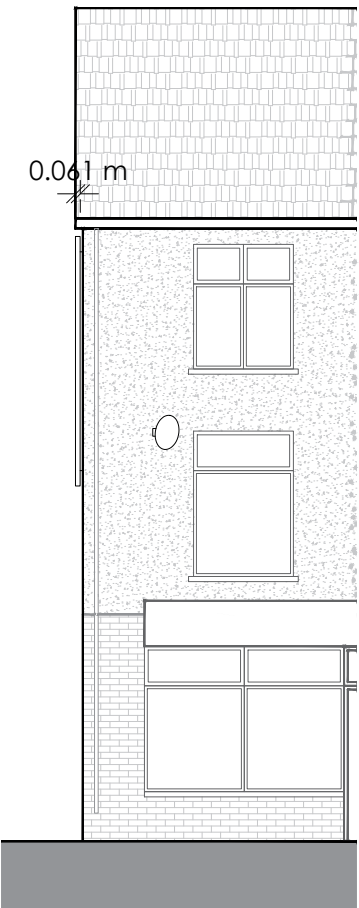
Side

Existing



Front

0 4m 8m



Side

Proposed

Title
Existing and Proposed Elevations

Address
147 Yorkshire Street, Rochdale, OL12
ODR, UK

Client

Job No.
27230

Issued
31/03/26

Scale
1:100 @ A3

Key
1. Proposed Digital Display

All information is to be checked on site for accuracy and fit. Only drawings with WD status with the most recent revision are to be used for construction.



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