



DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:

DC/26/0120

Land at 516852 130723, Freshwater Parade, Bishopric, Horsham, West Sussex,

DESCRIPTION:

Installation of 1No. BT Street Hub Unit and associated advertisement panels on either side of the unit.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

DC/26/0119	Installation of 1No. BT Street Hub Unit and associated advertisement panels on either side of the unit. (<i>Planning Application</i>)	Under Consideration
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RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015):

Policy 12 - Strategic Policy: Vitality and Viability of Existing Retail Centres

Policy 14- Shop Fronts and Advertisements

Policy 25- Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character

Policy 32- Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development

Policy 33- Development Principles

Policy 34- Cultural and Heritage Assets

Horsham Blueprint Business Neighbourhood Plan (HBBNP) 2019 - 2036:

Policy HB3 - Character of Development

Policy HB4 - Design of Development

Policy HB7 - A Welcoming Public Realm (Advertisements)

REPRESENTATIONS AND CONSULTATIONS RESPONSES

Where consultation responses have been summarised, it should be noted that Officers have had consideration of the full comments received, which are available to view on the public file at www.horsham.gov.uk

Consultations:

HDC Conservation: The Bishopric forms one of the historic routeways into Horsham and was originally within the gift of the Archbishop of Canterbury. It held a weekly market and the echo of this use has been carried through to the present day. Whilst it is noted that the location of the proposed hub is not within a conservation area, it is within the wider setting of the listed buildings on the northern side of the road.

Although the structure would be viewed against the modern shopfronts there is a concern at the increase in paraphernalia on the pavement. The incremental increase in signage, bins, telecoms cabinets etc all result in clutter within the streetscape which is essential to maintain a sense of place. The NPPF refers to the importance of good design being a key aspect of sustainable development and establishing a strong sense of place that is attractive and welcoming.

The ad hoc addition of infrastructure can result in the placing of equipment for the convenience of operators which is understood, however by taking an individual approach the appearance of the streetscene can become muddled. The proliferation of generic coloured cabinets, bins, signs and advertisements without a holistic approach risks creating a street that becomes confusing and detracts from the attractive qualities of the locality.

It would therefore be suggested that consideration is given to how the unit sits within the streetscene and a place centred approach taken to enable a positive interaction that enhances the context and character of the area.

Neighbourhood Council Comments:

Denne: Object: -

- From the plans it looks as though the proposed BT Hub could block the view of approaching buses for people waiting at the bus stop. Have the bus companies been consulted?
- HDNC considers the Hub is primarily a large advertising hoarding which could cause an obstruction in an area that HDC is trying to improve for businesses and their customers. The proposal violates the A Board policy designed to declutter pedestrian walkways.
- HDNC considers the design is garish and inappropriate in the town centre.

Forrest: Object: -

- The siting of the hubs would cause an obstruction/hazard to the detriment of pedestrians.
- They will cause a narrowing of the pavement to the detriment of pedestrians.
- The illuminated signs would be a distraction for motorists.
- The proposal is not in keeping with Horsham District Council's A Board policy which states that a sign should be placed directly against a building frontage. This policy is implemented to reduce street clutter.
- Is contrary to policy HB7(D) of the Horsham Blueprint Business Neighbourhood Plan.

Representations:

15 representations were received, objecting to the proposal for the following reasons: -

Reasons for objection material to this application regard degradation of street scene, visual clutter, visually unappealing, light pollution, distraction due to lighting and out of character for the townscape.

- The advertisement represents street clutter.
- There would be only modest benefits.
- Impact on available pavement width.
- A target for vandalism / anti-social behaviour.
- Potential adverse impacts on insects and birds arising from the illuminated displays
- Concerns regarding the effects on health, on individuals with medical implants and liability arrangements.
- Concerns regarding the wider social impacts of introducing additional digital advertising screens in the public realm.
- There is a lack of need.
- Concerns regarding the absence of a disposal and end-of-life management strategy for the installation.
- Concerns regarding the lack of meaningful pre-application consultation and the rationale for the proposed siting.
- Concerns regarding energy consumption and conflict with climate change objectives.
- Impact on highway safety, proposals will cause distractions to all highway users.

- Concerns regarding potential noise emissions from the installation.
- BNG requirements not being met.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUALITY:

The application has been considered having regard to Article 1 of the First Protocol of the Human Rights Act 1998, which sets out a person's rights to the peaceful enjoyment of property and Article 8 of the same Act, which sets out their rights in respect to private and family life and for the home. Officers consider that the proposal would not be contrary to the provisions of the above Articles.

The application has also been considered in accordance with Horsham District Council's public sector equality duty, which seeks to prevent unlawful discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between people in a diverse community, in accordance with Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. In this case, the proposal is not anticipated to have any potential impact from an equality perspective.

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Legislation

Regulation 3 of Part 1 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended) requires that local planning authorities assess applications for express consent in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking into account the provisions of the development plan so far as they are material and other relevant factors. An excerpt of the regulation is set out below:-

Powers to be exercised in the interests of amenity and public safety

3.—

- (1) A local planning authority shall exercise its powers under these Regulations in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking into account—
 - (a) the provisions of the development plan, so far as they are material; and
 - (b) any other relevant factors.
- (2) Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (1)(b)—
 - (a) factors relevant to amenity include the general characteristics of the locality including the presence of any feature of historic, architectural, cultural or similar interest;
 - (b) factors relevant to public safety include—
 - (i) the safety of persons using any highway, railway, waterway, dock, harbour or aerodrome (civil or military);
 - (ii) whether the display of the advertisement in question is likely to obscure, or hinder the ready interpretation of, any traffic sign, railway signal or aid to navigation by water or air;
 - (iii) whether the display of the advertisement in question is likely to hinder the operation of any device used for the purpose of security or surveillance or for measuring the speed of any vehicle.
- (3) In taking account of factors relevant to amenity, the local planning authority may, if it thinks fit, disregard any advertisement that is being displayed.
- (4) Unless it appears to the local planning authority to be required in the interests of amenity or public safety, an express consent for the display of advertisements shall not contain any limitation or restriction relating to the subject matter, content or design of what is to be displayed.

It is noted that a number of representations have been received on the application, and these have been considered in so far as they relate to the amenity and public safety considerations of an application for advertisement consent.

Amenity

The NPPF states that poorly placed advertisements can have a negative impact on the appearance of the built and natural environment. Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity as well as public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts.

Local policy reinforces the legislation and national policy aims. Policy 14 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) states that advertisements should be sensitively designed, of an appropriate size and appropriately located. Advertisements should not be detrimental to the visual amenity of the buildings or area by reason of its scale, detail, character, design or illumination; impact on pedestrian or highway safety; or result in, or compound, the perception of clutter on the street scene.

Policy 32 and 33 of the HDPF seeks to ensure that development promotes a high standard and quality of design in order to enhance and protect locally distinctive characters. The policies also seek to ensure that the scale, massing and appearance of development relates sympathetically with the built surroundings, landscape, open spaces and routes within and adjoining the site, including any impact on the sky-line and important views.

Policy HB3 and HB4 of the HBBNP cover the design and character of development within Horsham which is supported by the neighbourhood councils of Forest, Denne and Trafalgar. It advocates for high quality design and construction that integrates with its surroundings whilst minimising impact on natural environments. It should reflect the character and architectural forms of the area in order to protect against inappropriate design.

Policy HB7 of the NP states *“within the plan area, proposals for an advertisement and/or signage will be supported where it would not be obtrusive in appearance, cause visual clutter or lead to a proliferation of signs, appear dominant or overbearing in the street scene, or cause significant harm to the appearance of any building on which it would be displayed because of its siting, size, design, illumination, construction or materials.”*

The proposal would see the introduction of 2 large, illuminated advertising screens (front and rear), cased in black metal chassis sited on the pavement of Bishopric, within the defined extent of Horsham Town Centre and within the designated Horsham Town Centre Primary Shopping Area.

Bishopric forms the western edge of the Horsham Town Centre, characterised mainly by active ground floor commercial frontages with associated building signage and residential above. Within the setting of the application site there are various pieces of street furniture, including litter bins, a bench, a bus stop with integral advertisement panel, telegraph poles and lighting columns. A-boards, where present, are generally sited outside of the related commercial premises, as required by the Council's A-board policy.

The digital displays (0.9m x 1.63m) would introduce a modern and visually prominent form of advertising that contrasts and stands out amongst the prevailing character. While advertising boards are present in the locale, for example the bus stop, these advertisements are integrated more neatly into existing commercial frontages or infrastructure, where the advertisement appears as a largely secondary feature of a larger structure. In contrast, the proposed advertising panels would compete with the height of the fascia boards of commercial premises in the locality and would be highly visible in views along Bishopric, being seen alongside and in conjunction with existing street furniture and creating the appearance of visual clutter. This would represent an uncharacteristic feature of the street scene that would harm the local character and sense of place, resulting in detriment to the visual attractiveness of the area.

For the reasons set out above, it is considered that the proposed advertisement would unduly harm to the visual amenity of the area.

Public Safety

The Advertisement Regulations state that factors relevant to public safety include the safety of persons using any highway; whether the display of the advertisement in question is likely to obscure or hinder

the ready interpretation of any traffic sign and whether the display of the advertisement in question is likely to hinder the operation of any device used for the purpose of security or surveillance or for measuring the speed of any vehicle.

The siting of the advertisement would not obstruct road signage or sightlines and, given the nature of Bishopric, changing images would not be expected to cause significant potential for harmful distraction. The submission sets out that the advertisement would have an illumination not in excess of 600 cd/m² between 'dusk and dawn'. This would exceed the maximum of 500 cd/m², as set out in West Sussex County Council's Standing Advice for Illuminated Adverts. It is though considered that the increase in intensity would not be particularly distinguishable, and the level of illumination would not result in harm to highway safety.

Conclusion

Recommendation: Application Refused

Reason(s) for Refusal:

1. The advertisement, by reason of its scale, illumination and siting would appear visually intrusive and would introduce a harmful degree of visual clutter into the street scene. The advertisement would fail to respond positively to the character of the town centre and would detract from the quality of the public realm, therefore resulting in unacceptable harm to visual amenity, contrary to Policies 14, 32 and 33 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and Policies HB3, HB4 and HB7 of the Horsham Blueprint Business Neighbourhood Plan.

Plans list for: DC/26/0120

(The approved plans will form Condition 1 on the Decision Notice of all Permitted applications)

Schedule of plans/documents **not approved**:

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Supporting Statement	Noise management plan	NONE	26.01.2026
Supporting Statement	Anti-social behaviour management plan	NONE	26.01.2026
Supporting Docs	Declaration of RF public exposure conformity	NONE	26.01.2026
Supporting Statement	Lighting statement	NONE	26.01.2026
Supporting Statement	Covering letter	NONE	26.01.2026
Supporting Docs	WSCC Developers notice	NONE	26.01.2026
Supporting Statement	Planning statement	NONE	26.01.2026
Photos	Existing and proposed render	NONE	26.01.2026
Supporting Statement	Product statement	NONE	26.01.2026
Elevation & Floor plan	Dimensioned	STH-001	26.01.2026

Location & Site plan	Existing	001	26.01.2026
Location & Site plan	Proposed	002	26.01.2026
Elevation plan	Existing site elevations	003	26.01.2026
Elevation plan	Proposed site elevations	004	26.01.2026

DELEGATED

Authorising Officer sign/initial Guy Everest Date: 09.07.2026