

Consultation Response from KC, Highways Development Management
2020/91748 adj, Castlegate, Huddersfield
Advertisement Consent for erection of digital advertising screen (within a Conservation Area)
Date Responded: 14/07/20 | Responding Officer: J Turner | Responding Ref: K5-8SW/8

This application seeks advertisement consent for the erection of a digital advertising screen (within a conservation area) adjacent to Castlegate, Huddersfield.

It appears to be a resubmission of application number 2019/91883, which was refused on highway safety grounds following concerns expressed by the Principal Engineer of the Council's Highway Safety team. The comments from this application are repeated below and remain the judgement of Highways DM regarding this scheme:

A Highway Safety Report has been supplied by AMA to vindicate the positioning of the sign on a major junction, citing the TfL document Guidance for Digital Roadside Advertising and Proposed Best Practice (2013) as providing clear advice regarding the acceptable form of, or location for, digital roadside advertising.

This document states that "taking into consideration all existing guidance, research and established practice, the following is recommended as best practice guidance for the consideration of the acceptability of sites for roadside digital advertisements:

Locations

- Static digital advertising is likely to be acceptable in locations where static advertising exists or would be accepted.
- Sites at locations with high collision rates require detailed analysis
- Sites adjacent to rural roads may not be acceptable if there are otherwise low levels of information in the external environment.
- Locations with tight geometry or major junctions, merges, diverges or pedestrian crossings and located in the urban environment would require detailed analysis.
- Proposals should be considered on a site by site basis to ensure that the individual circumstances and physical constraints are fully assessed,
- The acceptability of individual sites should take account of appropriate measures to mitigate their impact by control of brightness, form of change and interval between advertisements."

The recommended Advertising Safety Guidance Form in the same document suggest paying particular attention to traffic signals and traffic signs, asking "Are there signals/signs close to the advert? Does the advert obscure them? Will the advert be seen behind the signals/signs? Will the advert cause the driver to look a significant distance from the signals/signs?"

The proposed location on Castlegate is on a major five arm signalised junction on the main town centre ring road, with an abundance of pedestrian crossings and traffic signs in the vicinity. The proposed digital sign would be close to the signals and signs, and would cause the driver to look a significant distance from the signals and signs.

Given this, TfL would expect this location to be given a full safety assessment, and Kirklees Highway Safety department are "opposed to the principle of siting illuminated adverts with varying messages in the vicinity of junctions, traffic signals, pedestrian crossing points etc. Their purpose is essentially to distract road users, and I suspect they are far more successful at doing this than traditional billboard posters. Bearing in mind that at this particular site, motorists will be faced with the sign whilst driving through signals and pedestrian crossing points." They are therefore opposed to the scheme.

It should be noted that there have been six injury accidents reported in the last five years at this

junction, including a serious injury accident in June 2018 directly in front of where the sign would be placed.

As suitability concerns have been raised by those whose remit it is to improve and maintain highway safety, Highways DM can only uphold these concerns and raise objection to the scheme.