Large format banner advertisements

Supplementary Planning Document

March 2008
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No to Compromise Taste at 4%
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Large format banner advertisements

A STAR IS BORN
A SPARKLING MIX OF LUXURY ONE & TWO BEDROOM APARTMENTS BUILT TO A HIGH SPECIFICATION

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0121 643 79
1.1 The recent introduction of large format banner advertising has seen a form of advertising not specifically referred to in other guidance. There have been a number of instances of banners displayed without the benefit of consent under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007. In the four cases in Birmingham where consent has been sought and refused, with a subsequent appeal, the City Council has successfully defended its decision in three of them.

1.2 However, without appropriate controls, a poor impression can be made on businesses, residents and visitors alike by scaffolding and scaffolding mesh within the City. This could undermine the considerable achievements that have been made to improve the quality of the built environment that has been achieved in recent years. In the winter months especially, this can be compounded by gales that can reduce the mesh to unsightly strips of polythene. Any infringement of quality is particularly noticeable in Birmingham where we maintain a high level of redevelopment. Some authorities have responded to this by encouraging advertising on scaffolding. This can enliven the façade of the building whilst work is taking place. This ensures that the mesh is constantly maintained, as well as bringing in a source of income to the owner of the building that can help offset repair or construction costs. There have been other instances in the City where banners have been attached directly to buildings where there is no current work being undertaken; this is to provide income on a commercial basis, without other potential wider benefits to the community.

1.3 Any proposals for the display of large format banners would continue to be considered on its merits and the individual circumstances and assessed against the general guidelines contained within Planning Policy Guidance Note 19 - Outdoor Advertisement Control. This states that refusals should only be on the grounds of amenity or public safety. The size and prominence of such displays invariably means that these are relevant factors. The guidance on poster panels states that they should respect the scale of their surrounding location and that large poster hoardings, which are often part of the fabric of the commercial and industrial areas, are usually out of place anywhere else. It also states that poster advertising is out of place in any predominantly residential area and should not normally be allowed. On this basis, any banner advertisements that do not have the benefit of an appropriate consent would be vigorously pursued.

1.4 Account should also be taken of the policies in The Birmingham Plan 2005, specifically the following paragraphs. Paragraph 3.8 seeks to protect and enhance what is good in the City’s environment and to improve what is less good. Paragraph 3.12 requires positive action to improve the quality of the built environment. Paragraph 3.15 encourages public art in order to add variety to the visual environment. Paragraph 3.32 states that proposals that would adversely affect buildings or areas of architectural interest will not be permitted. Finally, paragraph 6.39 states that safety will be a key factor in determining planning applications.

1.5 Policies already exist to cover advertisements on shopfronts and to traditional posters/hoardings, and are not covered by this document.
Recent appeal decisions

2.1 Inspectors’ comments from recent appeal decisions are helpful when defining policies in this area. These include:

NCP Car Park, Suffolk Street.
APP/P4605/H/01/1070661 and 1073665
“...banner displays would, because of their size, height and location, produce over-assertive, top-heavy and obstructive advertising...”
Appeal dismissed

Odeon Cinema, 139 New Street.
APP/P4605/02/1083149
“The megaposter would also randomly obscure window openings, disrupting the discernable line of fenestration...impact of such a large poster in this position would visually overwhelm the simple name and use of the building...and create obstructive advertising at the gateway site despite the general commercial character of the surroundings...”
Appeal dismissed

Lancaster House, 67 Newhall Street.
APP/P4605/H/02/1085119
“...the display...would arbitrarily obscure most of the plain buff brick wall...unduly dominating a major aspect of this generally well mannered building...would appear massively out of scale...I see no merit (in the banner) in such a stark and obtrusive manner to this appropriately restrained office building within a conservation area.”
Appeal dismissed

Birmingham Children’s Hospital, Steelhouse Lane.
APP/P4605/H/06/1198681
“Inspector not convinced that the two illuminated banner advertisements would prove to be an unacceptable distraction to road users.”
Appeal allowed
3.1 A large format banner will only normally be permitted where a building is to be scaffolded for building or related work, and that such scaffolding covers an entire elevation.

3.2 A commercial advertisement element should occupy no more than 40% of the extent of the scaffolded elevation. No elevation should normally contain an advertisement element greater than 500sq.m in area or 40% of the scaffolded elevation, whichever is the lesser. These size constraints have been selected as there are few instances where larger advertisements than those stated do not have the potential to be a visually intrusive feature in the street frontage.

3.3 Within sensitive areas such as conservation areas, or on, facing or in close proximity to a listed building, the entire scaffolding mesh must be covered by a 1:1 scale image of the building being constructed/refurbished, or other similar appropriate image. The use of 1:1 scale images will be encouraged in other locations.

3.4 Scaffolded elevations shall have the whole elevation covered by mesh to a good quality of workmanship, and shall have any commercial element sitting within, and framed by, the mesh.

3.5 The scaffold and associated banner advert(s) should be removed as soon as the relevant work, as described in 3.1 above, is complete. The advertisement consent will last no longer than the agreed building programme or one year, whichever is the shorter. Consent for continued display in accordance with this policy would not be unreasonably withheld.

3.6 Such adverts will not normally be permitted in predominantly residential areas.
Contacts and further information

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Sustainability Appraisal
A Sustainability Appraisal has been prepared to accompany this SPD. It can be found on the Council’s website at: www.birmingham.gov.uk/banners

Most Birmingham City Council publications can be made available in alternative formats or languages.

If you have difficulty reading this document please call us on (0121) 303 1115 to ask if a full or summary version can be made available in large print, another format or another language.

If you have hearing difficulties please call us via Typetalk 18001 0121 303 3030 or e-mail us at: info.devdir@birmingham.gov.uk