Document Title: Location Of Advertisement Hoardings (DC Guidelines No.40)

“Securing a Better environment for all the people of Birmingham”
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1. Introduction

1.1 The following guidelines apply to outdoor advertisement hoardings, including those with mechanically changing displays, ranging from 96 sheet size to smaller 12 sheet panels, and will be used to control the display of existing and proposed hoardings. The criteria also apply to ultravision and monopole type hoardings i.e. large advertisement hoardings mounted high above the ground in a single post.

1.2 Draft guidelines were approved by the Planning Committee on the 4 December 1997 for an interim period to allow for public consultation. On the 3 December 1998 the Planning Committee considered the public consultation comments and recommendations for alteration of the draft guidelines. The Planning Committee approved the guidelines as Supplementary Planning Guidelines.

1.3 The current statutory control of outdoor advertisement hoardings is contained in the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992.

2. General Principles

2.1 Advertisement applications must be treated on their individual merits with regard to the general characteristics of the locality in which they are to be displayed. In determining the applications the Control of Advertisement Regulations (1992) require that powers of control shall only be exercised:

* in the interests of Amenity (which means the visual amenity of the neighbourhood where the poster is to be displayed), and

* in the interests of Public Safety (which means the safety of people using any form of travel, including pedestrians, likely to be affected by the poster displayed).

However, PPG19 recognises the value of specific advertisement policy guidelines formulated having regard to matters of public safety and amenity, which will represent a material consideration in the determination of applications.

3. Relevant Unitary Development Plan Policies and Existing Supplementary Planning Guidance

3.1 UDP policies (Environment Chapter) include the following:

* Proposals which would have an adverse effect on the quality of the built environment will not normally be allowed (Para 3.10).

* Positive action to improve the quality of the environment will also be required (Para 3.11(d) identifies priorities including transport corridors).

* Proposals which would adversely affect buildings or areas of architectural interest will not be permitted (Para 3.22).
4. General Policy Approach

4.1 It is an objective of the Council through the implementation of its UDP policies to enhance the quality of the built environment, particularly along the main road, railway and canal routes through the City. Advertisement hoardings by definition comprise prominent and highly visible features on the street scene. They are designed to be visually prominent and can have an adverse impact on the environment. Indeed, in many locations they can harm the image of the city by being unduly obtrusive and contributing to an appearance of temporary treatment, lack of investment and preventing or obscuring landscaping.

4.2 Advertisement hoardings by their sheer size and bold content may harm the scale and overall appearance of an area, particularly a Conservation Area. They can have a major impact on the appearance of building spaces between buildings and the wider locality.

4.3 As such and particularly bearing in mind the number of existing hoardings throughout the city many of which may not have consent or the consent for which has expired, further displays are likely to be unacceptable unless it can be demonstrated that they would not have an adverse effect on the amenity of the street scene and the wider area. The Council will seek to remove unsightly examples of unauthorised hoardings through a comprehensive programme of discontinuance action.

4.4 These guidelines take into account the criteria for determining applications and appeals involving poster sites as set out in DETR Planning Policy Guidance on Outdoor Advertisements PPG19 and PPG15 Planning and the Historic Environment.

5. General Location and Land Use Guidelines

5.1 Conservation Areas

Sites in and directly adjoining the boundary of a Conservation Area will not normally be an acceptable location for the display of advertisement hoardings as the visual impact on the character of the Conservation Area is likely to be unsatisfactory on amenity grounds.

Exceptions may be made for sites in or adjoining the boundary of commercial Conservation Areas, where associated with screening for a temporary period of sites in the course of development or refurbishment.

5.2 Listed Buildings

Listed Buildings their curtilage and sites adjoining Listed Buildings which could adversely affect their setting will not normally be an acceptable location for the display of advertisement hoardings as the visual impact on the Listed Building and/or its setting is likely to be unsatisfactory in amenity terms.
5.3 Green Belt and Open Spaces

These areas will not normally be acceptable locations for the display of advertisement hoardings as they are likely to spoil the appearance of the open countryside, landscaped areas or areas of public and private open space. (Open space includes public open space used for recreational purposes, private playing fields and linear walkways; central reservations and land adjacent to traffic islands and areas of Nature Conservation). In considering the display of hoardings on highway verges, railway embankments or within railway cuttings. Specific regard will always be had to the particular visual characteristics of the land in question and the nature and appearance of nearby land including the presence of commercial activity and buildings.

5.4 Residential Areas

Advertisement hoardings of the size and type covered by this policy will not normally be acceptable in predominantly residential areas, due to the likely effect on the visual amenity of the immediate neighbourhood.

5.5 Mixed Commercial and Residential Areas

The display of an advertisement hoarding in such areas will normally only be acceptable in those circumstances where it can be demonstrated that it would have no adverse effect on amenity or where it could have a positive contribution, eg. screening an environmental eyesore such as a derelict site or site under construction.

5.6 Predominantly Commercial Areas

The display of advertisement hoardings in wholly commercial areas will only be acceptable if it can be demonstrated that it would have no adverse effect on amenity of the local area and do not detract from the objective of improving the image of the City as a whole. In such cases account will need to be taken of the scale of commercial frontages, the effect on visual amenity and the number of other existing advertisements, hoardings and street furniture.

5.7 Transport Corridors

The UDP recognises that positive action to improve the quality of the environment will be required. Transport corridors are identified as priority areas. Advertisement hoardings will only be acceptable where they do not detract from the visual amenity of the area and do not adversely affect the image of the City along an important main approach to the City. In this respect particular regard will be paid to maintaining the visual quality of sections of these corridors which have been subject to landscape improvements.

6. Public Safety

6.1 In every case where there may be a highway safety issue, the Director of Transportation will be consulted. There is also a statutory requirement to consult the Secretary of State for the Environment, Transport and the Regions on all advertisement which may affect the safety of persons using a motorway or trunk road
6.2 The siting of advertisement hoardings will not normally be acceptable where visible from the M6 Motorway, or A38 Aston Expressway where they are purposefully designed to be read from the roadway and the attention of drivers is likely to be distracted to an unacceptable degree.

6.3 The siting of advertisement hoardings near to any road or railway signal or any sign that assists any traffic or pedestrian or cyclist movement for example traffic lights or pedestrian crossings will not normally be acceptable unless there is a long range visibility to enable a driver to read the display before reaching a point in the transportation network where further distractions would increase the risk of accidents.

6.4 The display of advertisement hoardings must be sited so not to obstruct the minimum visibility lines set out in the Department of the Environment Transport and the Regions PPG13.

6.5 Illuminated advertisement hoardings will not be acceptable where the light source creates a glare and distraction to road users such as to create a traffic hazard.

6.6 Freestanding hoardings should not obstruct footpaths or provide hiding places and opportunities for crime against pedestrians and cyclists.

**7. Detailed design/siting guidelines for location of advertisement hoardings which meet the locational criteria**

7.1 Freestanding hoardings which are clearly separated from buildings and do not provide temporary screening for a site will not normally be acceptable unless it can be demonstrated that they would have no adverse effect on amenity.

7.2 Freestanding hoardings with associated landscaping may improve the amenity of a site which awaits development. In such cases proposals should normally incorporate a scheme of screen fencing including where appropriate fencing to back of footpath. Fencing should be of a robust type and forecourt landscaping (including where appropriate either tree, shrub or grass) should be provided to make a visual contribution to the street scene. Any such landscaping must be maintained during the life of the advertisement hoarding and this will be secured by a condition.

7.3 Hoardings sited at the back edge of a public footpath will not normally be acceptable. Any display should be set back a minimum of 2m unless there are visual amenity reasons to the contrary and shall be set back behind adjacent or predominant building lines.

7.4 Where hoardings are designed to form part of a boundary or screen, their size and location should respect and be similar in scale to the size of fencing proposed.

7.5 Advertisement hoardings should respect the scale of adjacent buildings. Excessive size and unsympathetic siting may spoil the character of a building, street frontage and canal frontage. Careful consideration will be given to the form of a proposal in relation to the character and scale of nearby buildings.
7.6 Advertisement hoardings on the gable ends of buildings in commercial and mixed use areas should not obscure architectural features of the building, or extend beyond the edges or the roofline of buildings.

The siting of any hoarding on the building must relate to the proportions of the building and respect the symmetry of the elevation. In each case the position of any hoarding must be visually acceptable.

7.7 Advertisement hoardings, including monopole or bipole units, will not be acceptable in locations which when viewed against the immediate surroundings create dominant skyline features. In particular when they are so out of scale or keeping with other features in the local built environment that they are harmful to the visual amenities of the locality. Modern monopole units may also be acceptable subject to compliance with other criteria, would replace a number of existing traditional hoardings.

7.8 Illuminated advertisement hoardings will not be acceptable where the light source would be of such intensity, or in such a location taking into account the ambient lighting or illumination level in the area, as to create a loss of amenity to adjacent residential occupiers or to be unduly prominent at night when lit. They may be acceptable where they can contribute to public safety. Where appropriate consideration will be given to the imposition of conditions to limit the intensity of illumination or to limit illumination to the hours of general commercial activity.

7.9 The display of advertisement hoardings where the rear structural element of the display would be wholly or partially visible to the occupiers of adjoining or nearby properties to the uses of adjacent transport infrastructures (including public footpaths) or public open space or public car parks will not be acceptable unless it is satisfactorily screened or treated.

7.10 Advertisements should not be located on sites that will obscure or be detrimental to areas of existing or potential landscaping. This includes public and private open space and open space within adjoining road, rail and canal corridors and areas of nature conservation.

7.11 The display of advertisement hoardings should not give rise to a situation where hoardings screen or enclose a public facility, such as car parks and public footpath, preventing natural surveillance of land which is not subject to an operational CCTV system.

7.12 Proposed advertisement displays which create visual clutter by reason of addition to existing displays will not normally be acceptable along transport corridors. In most locations it will not normally be appropriate for more than 4 x 48-sheet or 2 x 96-sheet up to a maximum of 4 hoardings in total to be displayed within a 200m length of a highway frontage subject to a maximum of 2 x 48-sheet or 1 x 96-sheet within 50m length of adjoining frontage. Regard will be had to the specific characteristics of the locality including the overall width of the carriageway and the benefits to be achieved from appropriate screening of land due to a particular display.

8. Legislation and Planning Guidance

8.1 Town and Country Planning (Control of advertisement) Regulations 1992 HMSO.
8.2 Department of Environment Transport and the Regions (PPG19) Planning Policy Note 19 - Outdoor Advertising 1992 HMSO.

8.3 Birmingham Unitary Development Plan 1993, obtained from Department of Planning and Architecture (Draft revised UDP will be published in 1999) Tel: 0121 303 4805.

8.4 The Stirchley Framework.

8.5 Selly Oak Draft Local Plan.

8.6 The A45 Coventry Road Corridor Framework.

8.7 The A38 (North) Bassettts Pole to Gravelly Hill Framework.

9. Contact List

9. Planning Control Policy - Telephone 0121 303 3208
Planning Control Enforcement (Advertisements) 0121 303 2933
Planning Control Area Team (see plan attached)

Address: Department of Planning and Architecture
Planning Control Divisions
Baskerville House
Broad Street
Birmingham B1 2NA

Date Guidelines Approved/Revised 3 December 1998.

10. Size of Advertisement Hoardings

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