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PROPERTY & PLANNING CONSULTANTS

7 Bell Yard, London, WC2A 2JR • 0203 925 4603 • www.ardentland.com

Planning Team
South Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council
Town Hall and Civic Offices
Westoe Road
South Shields
NE33 2RL

4 February 2025

Dear Sir / Madam

Application for Express Advertisement Consent, Viking Centre, Viking Precinct, Jarrow, NE32 3LQ.

Please find enclosed our client's application for Consent to Display Advertisements under Regulation 9 of the Town & Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

This application seeks the following:

> *Erection of two no digital signs at The Viking Centre (1 no at 41 Bede Precinct & 1 no at 106-112 Ellison Street).*

The application comprises the following documents and drawings:

- Express Consent Application Form
- Drawing no. T4871 A4 050 rev – Site Location Plan
- Drawing no. T4871 A4 051 rev – Site Plan, sign 1
- Drawing no. T4871 A4 052 rev – Site Plan, sign 2
- Drawing no. T4871 A4 060 rev – Elevations, sign 1, existing & proposed
- Drawing no. T4871 A4 061 rev – Elevations, sign 2, existing & proposed
- Drawing no. T4871 A4 062 rev – Display Specifications, sign 1
- Drawing no. T4871 A4 063 rev – Display Specifications, sign 2
- Appendix 1 - Schedule of Suggested Special Conditions
- Appendix 2 - Crashmap Extract
- Appendix 3 – Indicative Sign Position

The fee has been paid via the Planning Portal.

Proposal

This application seeks to consent to display two digital signboards at the Viking Centre, Jarrow.

The proposal is for two landscape format signs, one set above 41 Bede Precinct and the second above 106-112 Ellison Street, the signs being of traditional proportions while utilising modern digital sign technology.

This proposal is part of a national shift towards the use of digital displays by the signage industry, positively contributing towards the desire for a sustainable and flexible advertising estate.

The Application Site

The application site is set within the heart of the Centre in respect of sign one and set on the exterior wall in respect of sign two.

Each sign is readily accommodated on the host site, with no loss of retail space, employment opportunity, parking or circulation space.

The site is not within a Conservation Area or part of a Heritage Asset.

Application Site Planning History

The host site has a range of retail and related consents in place commensurate with its position as the LDF designated Jarrow Town Centre, Primary Shopping Centre.

Adjacent Land Uses

The site is within a wholly commercial area.

To the north is the body of the Shopping Centre with the commercial Grange Road beyond.

To the south is again the Centres own buildings, including a large Morrisons supermarket.

To the west is the Home Bargains site with the Jarrow Metro Station beyond.

To the east is again the body of the Centre with large unit retailers beyond.

The adjoining road network is high-level street-lit with level, defined footways on each side.

Nearby occupiers have their own signage, there are no other commercial signs of the type proposed visible at the same time as the application signs.

Adjacent Land Uses Planning History

Beyond the host site, the wider area has a range of commercial consents in place in keeping with its situation as an active Town Centre.

Background to the Application & Advantages

The applicant wishes to improve the delivery of advertising to the central Jarrow area and so facilitate sustainable, relevant, locally focused messaging (including for occupiers of the Centre) rather than the display of fixed, often national advertisements and in a location that avoids more sensitive parts of the town where positioning can be less sympathetic to host structures.

Elsewhere in the Country and across the Region we have seen the benefit of this flexibility which can include public messages and the more ready display of non-commercial adverts (such as Charity adverts) during void periods.

The displays would present a range of advertisements, each lasting for not less than 10 seconds.

In the case of Bede Precinct (as a pedestrian area) content could be static or animated and in the case of Ellison Street (as a roadside setting) displaying static content only. The change between each advertisement would be almost instantaneous with no animation or special effects (in the case of Ellison Street).

The use of digital technology allows the proposed signs to be operated remotely thus materially reduces vehicle movements to manage the estate with only periodic inspection and servicing being required.

Digital images also completely remove the requirement to print, glue and dispose of several hundred square meters of paper in a typical year when compared to traditional (paper & paste) posters & signs.

Planning Policy

The legislative framework for the control of advertisements is contained within The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

Regulation 3 states that advertising should be controlled in the interest of amenity and public safety, taking into account the provisions of the development plan, in so far as they are material.

The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023) at paragraph 141 reiterates the need for assessment to conduced only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts. The NPPF goes on to state that the regime for advertising consent should simple, efficient & effective.

The NPPF at paragraph 85 places significant wight on the on the need to support economic growth. Advertising is a key part of economic growth both regionally and nationally through direct employment in the advertising (& associated) industries and indirectly to those who take advantage of advertising opportunities in the promotion of their own goods and services in addition to Government revenue through local and national taxation.

Local Development Plan Policy and the nature of the hosts sites own designation are aligned to the NPPF & Regulations.

We therefore consider this proposal to be aligned to both Local Plan & National Policy as set out below.

Amenity

As explored above, the application site is located within a wholly commercial area.

In general amenity terms, each proposed sign is contained by the host site and the face of the proposed signs are not overlooked by any residential properties or other sensitive land uses.

They are well contained by commercial occupiers and road alignment, limiting their visibility to a relatively short section of street-lit road in the case of Ellison Street and contained wholly by the Shopping Centre in the case of Bede Precinct.

The scale of the signs matches their immediate neighbours, in both cases being set on the host buildings with their tops set below existing roof heights.

The proposed signs are then each appropriately framed to each side by the substantial existing buildings, being set above the side wall of Wilkos unit and a vacant unit next to the Iceland unit respectively.

Each sign is set back behind existing balcony features such that they do not dominate the adjoining footway or carriageway.

They are also lower than existing streetlighting.

Levels of illumination are suggested to match Institute of Lighting Professionals guidelines such that they are not overbright and to avoid glare.

With neighbouring building size and design in mind, we consider the impact on amenity to be neutral to positive, through the introduction of colour and interest

to otherwise unremarkable side wall in the case of Ellison Street and adding a feature to the pedestrianised Bede Precinct through the use of a simple, high-quality signs.

Accordingly, their location in a commercial area will result in their slim, simple design being readily absorbed into the street scene.

There are no other signs of the type proposed in the immediate area with existing occupiers own signage being set back from the proposed site and thus visually separate. As such, the potential for harm from clutter or cumulative impact is low.

The proposals potential to harm the amenity of the occupiers of neighbouring buildings is also low.

On general approach, the proposal is contained by the host site and set with their backs to existing structures, as such the proposed signs do not cut across any existing open views nor do they create a skyline feature or obscure existing buildings of architectural or historic merit.

Recognising the illuminated nature of the proposed signs, we look to adopt levels recommended by the Institute of Lighting Professionals ('The Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements' PLG05, 2015); that report recommends a maximum luminance level of 600 candelas/sqm in urban & suburban areas at night for displays up to 10sqm and 300 candelas/sqm in urban & suburban areas at night for displays over 10sqm (and 5,000 cd/m2 during the day) and we have suggested a Special Condition to match this.

Taking the above together we consider the proposed signs (individually or together) are not at odds with the NPPF or Local Plan Policy as there is no harm to amenity.

Public Safety (Highways Safety)

Local and National Policy seeks to protect Public Safety.

The proposed sign at Bede Precinct is in a pedestrian area and so is unlikely to have any impact on public safety.

In respect of the proposed sign at Ellison Street, the road nearby has a good safety record with one incident (classified as slight) reported in the last 5 years of data.

That incident is at location where the content of the proposed sign is unlikely to be readily visible.

An extract from Crashmap is shown at Appendix 2.

The proposal is contained entirely on its own land with an existing a balcony detail below.

The proposed sign has a good forward range of visibility, appearing gradually on approach in the drivers forward cone of visibility as they travel towards the Centre and Grange Road.

Vitally, the proposed sign does not obstruct or clash with any official road sign or signal; owing to its position set back behind wide areas of footway there is visual separation between the proposed sign and Highways infrastructure.

As such, drivers have ample opportunity to respond to prevailing road conditions on approach.

This approach to site selection and design therefore accords with best practice across the UK, including the Waterman report commissioned by Transport for London in March 2013 who surmised (inter-alia) that research indicated that roadside digital advertising is not inherently unsafe but should be operationally managed in accordance with site specific constraints.

Therefore, as an appropriately lit unit, displaying (by its nature) simple messages, logos or images at an appropriate rate of change, the proposed signs will be readily absorbed (or ignored) as part of the driving task particularly as we consider that there is nothing unusual or complicated about the highway network in the area to give rise to special road safety concerns.

As such, we consider it extremely unlikely that any driver who is exercising a reasonable degree of care for their own and others safety would be so distracted or confused by the proposed sign at Ellison Street as to cause harm.

In terms of structural safety, the proposed signs are supported entirely on the host site with the display oversailing private land, i.e., no part of the proposed signs are on or over the highway.

Summary

The principle of signage in commercial settings such as this is well established and we consider that this proposal allows the advertising offering to the Viking Centre and wider Jarrow Town to be delivered in a modern, forward-thinking and sustainable way by taking advantage of digital sign technology and in a location that is away from the more sensitive parts of the town.

We further consider that the display of signage in a pedestrian area and alongside this easily driven section of road would not automatically cause any harm to public safety as they are set back from the vehicle carriageway and away from official signs and signals.

The proposal if permitted, will not harm future generations and can be easily removed at a later date to allow future development needs and as such seeks to align to Sustainable Development aims at paragraph 7 of the NPPF.

Should you have any queries in respect of this application or require additional detail we would be happy to discuss this with you.

Yours faithfully.

Stuart Wellman MRICS
Director
stuart@ardentland.com
07414 101 273

Appendix 1

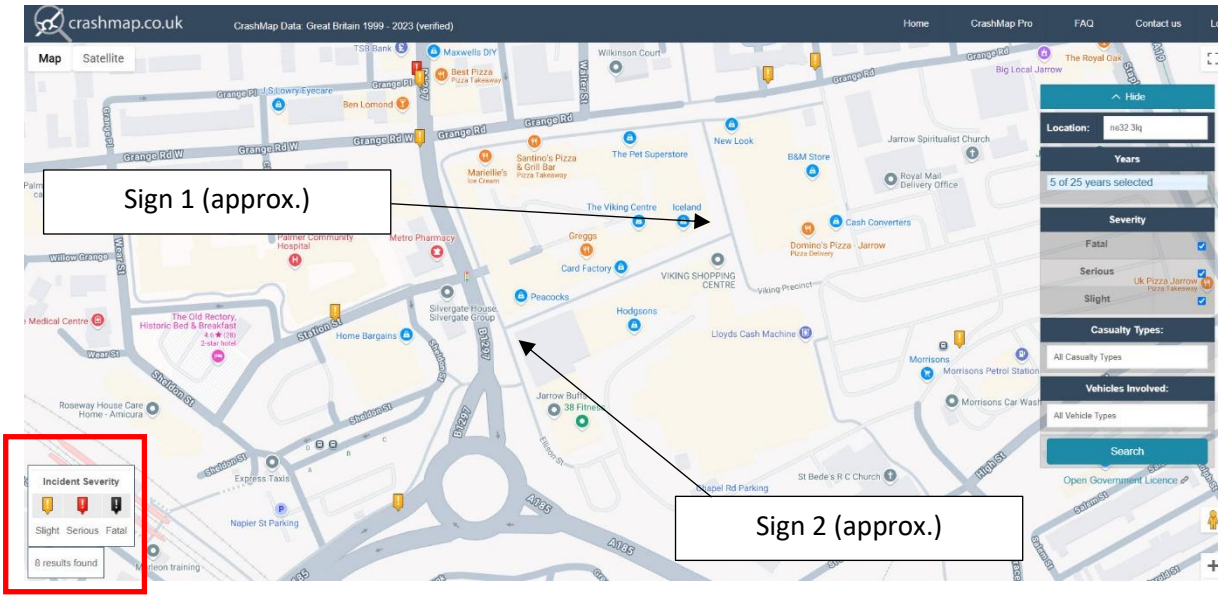
Schedule of Suggested Special Conditions

1. Rate of change shall be no more than once every 10 seconds.
2. The signs shall not display flashing or strobing elements.
3. In respect of sign 1, 41 Bede Precinct
    a. Illumination shall not exceed 600cd/m2 at night & 5,000 cd/m2 at day.
4. In respect of sign 2, 106-112 Ellison Street
    a. Illumination shall not exceed 300cd/m2 at night & 5,000 cd/m2 at day.
    b. The sign shall display static content only.

Appendix 2

Crashmap Report

Report produced 31 January 2025



CrashMap Data: Great Britain 1999 - 2022 (verified)

Data source Department for Transport

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Appendix 3

Indicative Sign Positions

Sign 1, 41 Bede Precinct



Sign 2, 106-112 Ellison Street



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