The Planning Inspectorate

# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 18 June 2019

**by E Griffin LLB Hons**

**an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State**

**Decision date: 02 October 2019**

**Appeal Ref: APP/U4610/H/18/3215364**
**Outside of 36-42 Corporation Street, Coventry CV1 1GF**

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 against a refusal to grant express consent.
- The appeal is made by Mr Nathan Still of Infocus Public Networks Limited against the decision of Coventry City Council.
- The application Ref ADV/2018/2026 dated 12 July 2018 was refused by notice dated 11 September 2018.
- The advertisement proposed is the display of a single illuminated sequential display affixed to the frame of the communication hub.

## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

## Procedural Matters

2. The communication hub to which the description in the heading refers was not in place at the time of my visit. However, the communication hub does not fall within the remit of this appeal which relates solely to the illuminated sequential display.

## Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposed advertisement on amenity and public safety.

## Reasons

*Amenity*

4. The proposal is for the display an illuminated advertisement which would be on one side of a communication hub on Corporation Street near to the junction with West Orchard Street. West Orchard Street leads to the West Orchard Shopping Centre. There is a pedestrian crossing across West Orchard Street in close proximity of the appeal site. There are a number of student buildings nearby and West Orchard Street is the entrance for visitors on foot and by car to the West Orchard Shopping Centre. The Belgrade theatre is to the west of the appeal site on the opposite side of the road.

5. Looking west from the appeal site towards the Belgrade theatre, there is a row of symmetrical trees and plant boxes and the Council indicates that the area has been decluttered and revamped as part of the Belgrade Plaza public realm scheme. There are two traditional telephone boxes and a single

illuminated display board beyond the trees on the pavement. To the east of the appeal site, beyond the pedestrian crossing, there is another illuminated display board on the pavement. The two existing display boards are of a similar size and appearance to the appeal proposal.

6. The advertisement would be displayed in a prominent location on the wide pavement towards its outer edge. It would be conspicuous in public views from a number of angles. Irrespective of the direction that the advertisement would face, it would introduce a discordant element in a prominent corner location. It would add further visual clutter to a carefully designed public area in close proximity to two existing display boards.

7. Consequently, I do find that the proposed advertisement would harm the amenity of the area.

*Public Safety*

8. The advertisement would be positioned around 2.1 metres from the edge of the pavement. However, the wide pavement which is curved at the junction of Corporation Street and West Orchard Street does mean that pedestrians are not likely to be unduly obstructed by the advertisement. If pedestrians were intending to use the pedestrian crossing to continue along Corporation Street, they are likely to be following a desire line further in on the footway. The location of the advertisement is not in my view sufficiently close to the pedestrian crossing to obstruct visibility and pedestrian flow. I consider it unlikely that pedestrians would step out from behind the advertisement to cross the highway in view of the width of the pavement at this point and the proximity of a pedestrian crossing on this side of the road.

9. I therefore do not find that the siting of the advertisement would pose a danger to public safety.

**Conclusion**

10. Whilst not determinative, there would be conflict in terms of amenity with Policy DE1 of the Coventry Local Plan 2016 and Policy CC1 of the Coventry City Centre Area Action Plan. These policies seek to ensure high quality design, including attractive and uncluttered public spaces. I note that there would be some economic benefits through advertisement revenue but that does not alter my findings with regard to the harm that I have found with regard to amenity.

11. For the reasons given, the appeal is dismissed.

*E Griffin*

INSPECTOR