



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 17 April 2026

by J Symmons BSc (Hons) CEng MICE

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 7 May 2026

Appeal Ref: APP/B2002/Z/25/3377073

Grimsby Truck Stop and Wash, Estate Road 1, Grimsby

North East Lincolnshire DN31 2TB

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended) against a refusal to grant express consent.
 - The appeal is made by Connexin Limited against the decision of North East Lincolnshire Council.
 - The application Ref DM/0722/25/ADV.
 - The advertisement proposed is 2No back to back static digital screens.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The Regulations¹, National Planning Policy Framework dated December 2024 (the Framework) and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) make it clear that advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of public safety and amenity. I have had regard to the policies of the development plan and supplementary guidance only in so far as they are a material consideration relevant to matters before me.
3. A Highway Safety Report (Reference: MAL/A180 GTP LED Rev 0) titled 'LED Signage Proposal A180 Grimsby Truck Stop and Wash' (Highway Safety Report) by Meraki Alliance was issued in support of the appeal. However, this report represents new information not submitted at the application stage and therefore not considered by the Council or interested parties including the Highway Authority, National Highways and Humberside Police.
4. The 'Procedural Guide: Planning Appeals – England (for appeals relating to applications dated on or before 31 March 2026)' makes clear that, in appeals against the refusal of express advertisement consent, other than setting out the grounds of appeal, the appellant will not normally be able to submit further material unless it is specifically requested by the Inspector. The same restriction applies to the Council. Interested parties are also advised that, at the appeal stage, they will not normally have a further opportunity to make representations.
5. The guidance also allows for the submission of 'any other essential supporting documents' which I consider covers such things as material necessary to explain the appeal, to clarify information that has already been before the Council and interested parties, or to address genuinely significant changes in circumstances.

¹ Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended)

However, other than the Highway Safety Report responding to a reason for refusal, no justification to explain why it was not submitted at the application stage or why it should be accepted at the appeal stage has been provided. Nor has any evidence been presented to show that the Council or interested parties have had an opportunity to consider and comment on it. As such, accepting this material at the appeal stage would risk procedural unfairness and prejudice the Council and interested parties. Accordingly, the Highway Safety Report cannot be accepted, and I have considered the appeal based on the plans and documents originally before the Council and consulted on by interested parties.

Main Issues

6. The main issues in the determination of the appeal are the effect the proposal would have on:
- the visual amenity of the area; and
 - public safety.

Reasons

Visual amenity

7. The proposal comprises two back-to-back static digital display screens positioned within the Grimsby Truck Stop & Wash site, close to the boundary with the A180. In this location, the site's southern boundary with the A180 is largely open in character, allowing clear views from the carriageway across parts of the surrounding commercial and industrial estate and towards the wider skyline. The A180 corridor here contains limited signage and lighting and, aside from a large Grimsby Truck Stop advertisement on the north side of the road, a large directional traffic sign on the south side and some modest speed-related signage, there is a general absence of other large-scale advertising or highway signage in the vicinity.
8. In this locality, the commercial and industrial buildings are clearly visible and form a recognisable element within views from the A180. The closer-range views are of a utilitarian-built form reflecting the area's commercial character. Due to the fast-moving highway environment, the A180's slightly elevated alignment, the wider skyline backdrop and the generally muted colouring of the buildings, the prominence of this is somewhat subdued and it is not overly distracting.
9. The introduction of two very large, back-to-back static digital display screens in proximity to, and directly within, views from the A180 would result in a visually dominant feature. Owing to their size, height, illumination and close relationship with the carriageway, and in the absence of comparable large-scale advertising or other solid vertical features in the vicinity, the screens would introduce visual clutter and draw disproportionate attention. They would visually compete with the established commercial context and would appear as an incongruous and visually intrusive feature, detracting from the existing visual character of the area.
10. The PPG² indicates that large poster-hoarding may be acceptable in industrial or commercial areas of major cities, but only where they do not adversely affect visual amenity of the neighbourhood. It therefore follows that advertisements must

² PPG Paragraph: 079 Reference ID: 18b-079-20140306

be assessed on their own merits and in their specific context. In this case I have considered the proposal on this basis and found visual amenity harm.

11. For the reasons given above, the proposed advertisement would have a detrimental effect on visual amenity. Accordingly, so far as relevant to amenity, it would conflict with Policy 22 of the North East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2013 to 2032 (2018) (LP), which seeks, amongst other matters, to ensure that advertisements respect the interests of amenity.

Public safety

12. The proposal would be located on a straight section of the A180, which is subject to a 70 miles per hour (mph) speed limit. However, it would also be sited close to the eastbound deceleration zone serving the Pyewipe Roundabout, where drivers are required to anticipate changes in traffic conditions and adjust speed and lane position.
13. In this context, while no formal objection was raised on highway safety grounds at the application stage, National Highways, the Highway Authority, and the Humberside Police Traffic Management Officer all expressed concern that the proposal could give rise to driver distraction. These concerns related specifically to the potential for unexpected queuing traffic in the vicinity of the roundabout, at a location where a high level of driver concentration is required.
14. From my site visit, albeit representing a snapshot in time, I observed vehicles travelling past the appeal site at high speeds (in the order of 70mph) before entering the deceleration zone, where drivers were required to reduce speed and change lanes. This reinforces the sensitivity of the location and the importance of minimising features that could distract drivers at this point on the highway.
15. No evidence has been submitted at the application stage to show the concerns raised regarding highway safety were addressed. While a Highway Safety Report has been provided at this appeal stage, due to the details set out above I have not taken it into account. Therefore, based on the plans and information that were before the Council, I conclude that the proposed digital display screens would introduce a visually prominent and distracting feature at an extremely sensitive location on the A180. Given the high-speed nature of the road and its proximity to the Pyewipe Roundabout's deceleration zone, the potential for driver distraction cannot be discounted. In these circumstances, the proposal would adversely affect highway safety.
16. Although the proposal would not obstruct sightlines or interfere with the physical operation of the A180, this does not remove its capacity to distract drivers' attention and adversely affect highway safety.
17. While the PPG³ indicates that advertisements located within commercial or industrial areas are less likely to give rise to road safety concerns, it does not suggest that such locations are automatically acceptable. Each proposal must still be assessed on its own merits, having regard to its specific siting, scale and relationship with the highway environment. This does not therefore change my view on the adverse effects the proposal would have on highway safety.

³ PPG Paragraph: 067 Reference ID: 18b-067-20140306

18. For the above reasons, the proposed advertisement would be detrimental to public safety. Accordingly, so far as it is relevant to public safety, it would conflict with Policy 22 of the LP which seeks advertisements to respect public safety.

Other Matters

19. It is indicated that the displays would incorporate measures such as ambient light sensors to regulate brightness, static imagery, and smooth transitions between images. However, given the size, siting and visual prominence of the screens these features would not acceptably mitigate the adverse visual and highway safety impacts of the proposal.
20. The proposal would be monitored remotely at all times and maintenance would be undertaken to address any issues that arise. It is also detailed that no residential properties would be affected. However, these matters would not address or mitigate the identified harm to visual amenity and highway safety.
21. Reference has been made to a digital display screen located within a commercial and industrial area in Hull alongside the A63. However, beyond a single photograph, no substantive details of its scale, siting, design or context have been provided. I am therefore unable to conclude that it is directly comparable to the proposal before me. In any event, each case must be assessed on its own individual merits, and for the reasons given above, I have found that the proposal in this instance would result in harm.
22. The Framework indicates that significant weight should be given to development that achieves high levels of sustainability, particularly where it demonstrates high-quality design and successful integration with its surroundings. However, as set out above, the proposal would fail to integrate successfully into its surroundings. Moreover, it has not been shown that the proposal would deliver anything more than a limited level of advertising or public benefit within the local authority area, nor that less harmful alternative locations have been adequately explored. As such, it has not been demonstrated that the proposal's sustainability credentials are of sufficient substance to outweigh the identified harm to visual amenity and public safety.

Conclusion

23. For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed.

J Symmons

INSPECTOR