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Dear Sir or Madam

APPLICATION FOR ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT for REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING SHEET ADVERTISEMENT BILLBOARD WITH 1no. SHEET DIGITAL POSTER AT LAND AT BRUNEL CT, ROWDEN HILL, BATH ROAD, CHIPPENHAM, SN15 2AP

I write to you regarding Network Rail's application for advertisement consent for the replacement of 1no. 48 sheet advertisement display with 1no. D48 digital display at land at Brunel Ct, Rowden Hill, Bath Road, Chippenham, SN15 2AP.

Application Submission

The application, which has been submitted via the Planning Portal (Ref. PP-15227580), comprises the following information:

Title	Drawing Number	Revision
Site Location Plan		
General Arrangement and Section	3714-VED-XX-XX-DWG-ST-005001	Z01
Camera Bracket Steelwork Section and Details	3714-VED-XX-XX-DWG-ST-005004	Z01
Digital Board Cladding Sections and Details	3714-VED-XX-XX-DWG-ST-005006	Z01

The requisite application fee £610 (along with the Planning Portal Service Charge of £149) totalling £759.00.

Please note that whilst the application process via the Planning Portal requires a defined time period for the advertisement to be in place, the advert will be in place for the foreseeable future.

We look forward to receiving your confirmation that the application has been registered on the basis of the information submitted with this letter.

If you have any queries regarding this application or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

1.0 Site Context

- 1.1 The application site is situated on Network Rail operational land adjacent to the Grade II listed railway bridge that runs over Bath Road. The proposed display would be positioned within a narrow strip of railway land immediately south of the Main Line (Paddington to Penzance) MLN1 railway line and in close proximity to the railway bridge.
- 1.2 The surrounding area is characterised by a mix of transport, residential and commercial land uses. The railway corridor runs from the northeast side of Chippenham to the southwest. Residential properties consist of houses in Burnel Court and along Bath Road. A fuel station with associated activities such as car wash, retail and takeaways is located across the road from the site with a public house further down the road. Bath Road is a principal route into Chippenham centre and experiences high volumes of vehicular traffic as well as pedestrian activity.
- 1.3 The site is not located within a Conservation Area, whilst the railway bridge is listed there are no other designated heritage assets within the immediate vicinity that would be affected by the proposed advertisement display. The site forms part of the operational railway corridor adjacent to Bath Road and is situated within a heavily urbanised transport environment.

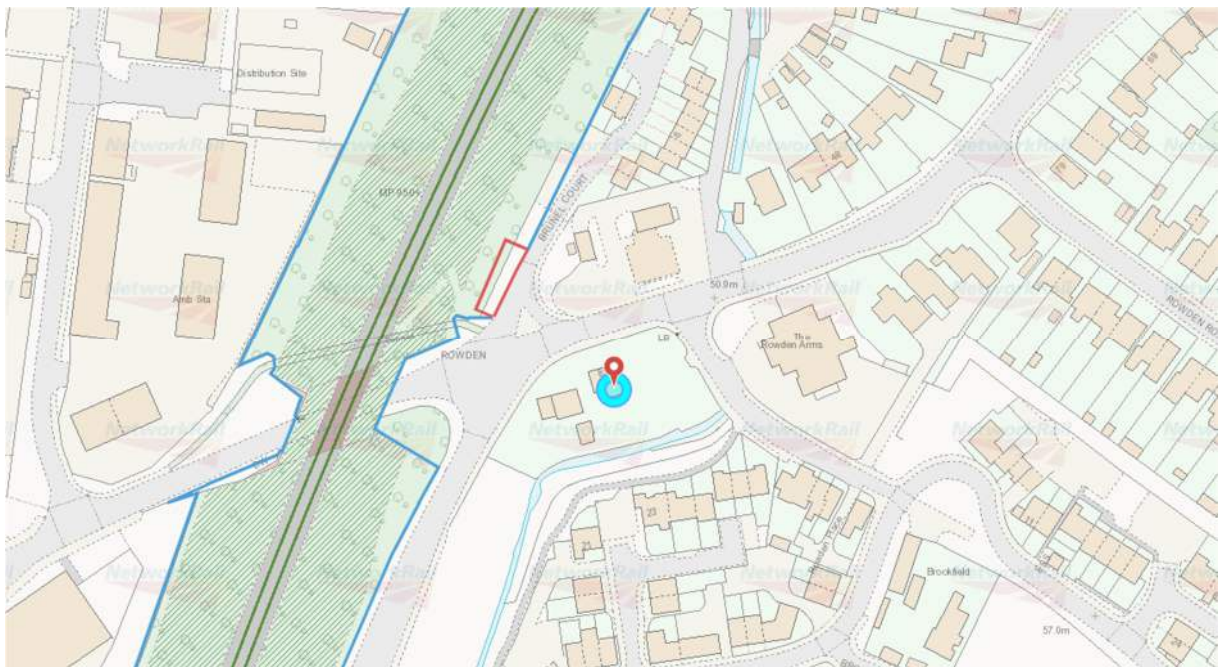


Image: Location plan

2.0 Proposals

- 2.1 It is proposed that the existing 48 sheet advert on Bath Road will be replaced with a D48 Digital screen. The proposed advertisement would feature a landscape-format display with a surface area of 18sqm. The display unit will be housed on a steel support structure.
- 2.2 Illumination levels will comply with the recommendations of the Illumination levels of the Institute of Lighting Professionals, as set out in The Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements Including Digital Displays (PLG05/23)¹. This guidance represents the most recent standard for illuminated signage.
- 2.3 It is proposed that the illuminance levels will therefore be limited to a maximum of 5,000cd/m² during daylight and 300cd/m² at night. Images will be carefully calibrated and strictly controlled so that they appear appropriately illuminated during daylight, night, dawn, dusk, and periods of inclement weather.
- 2.4 The proposed screen will display static images only and will not feature animation, video content, flashing images or scrolling text.
- 2.5 Overall, the proposal would integrate well with its commercial setting, maintaining the established advertising character of the site. The proposed screen is of a similar size to the existing static board, in an identical location and would not adversely affect the character or appearance of the surrounding area.



Image: Existing Sheet Advertisement Location

¹ <https://docs.planning.org.uk/20251016/8/T3525NMF19P00/tjy1e18bh1khwech.pdf>

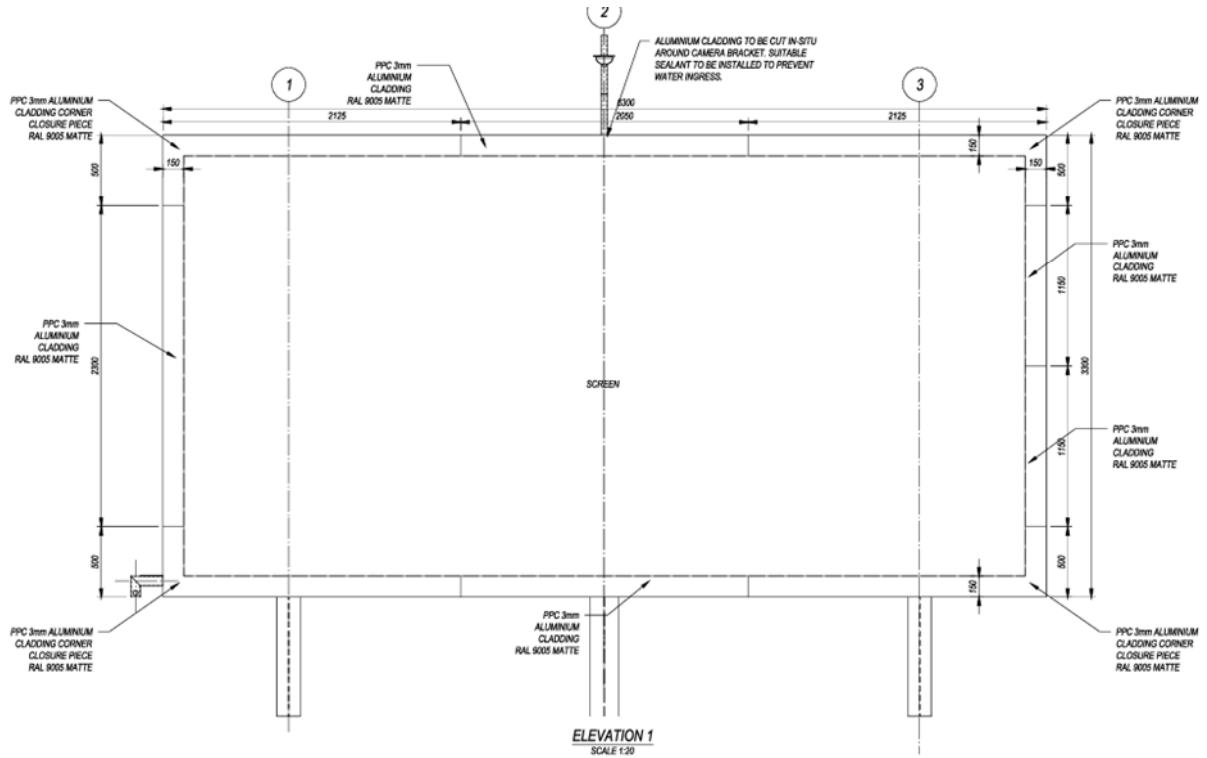


Image: Proposed Replacement D48 Screen



Image: Visualisation of proposed screen to replace existing sheet advert

3.0 Planning Policy and relevant information

- 3.1 The legislative framework for the control of advertisements is contained within The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (the “Regulations”). 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, in addition to any other relevant factors.
- 3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework 2026 (NPPF) does not contain any specific national policy relating to advertisements. The previous December 2024 NPPF included paragraph 141, which stated that advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) confirms that the advertisement consent regime is a separate and lighter-touch process than the system for obtaining planning permission for development. The PPG also confirms that local plans do not need to contain specific advertisement policies, although authorities may include evidence-based policies where necessary to protect the distinctive character of particular areas.
- 3.3 The 2026 NPPF was published on 17 August 2026 and replaced the December 2024 version, it no longer contains a specific policy relating to advertisements, relevant Development Plan policies remain material considerations in the determination of advertisement consent applications. For completeness, the relevant Development Plan policies are set out below.
- 3.4 The Development Plan for the area comprises the Wiltshire Core Strategy, Chippenham Site Allocations Plan, Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan, made neighbourhood plans and the adopted Minerals and Waste Plans. The WCS policy CP57 outlines the council’s requirements for ensuring high quality design and place shaping, in particular item x. states that sensitive design of advertisements that are sympathetic to their local setting by means of scale, design, lighting and materials. A similarly sized advertisement display has occupied the site for more than two decades. The location is nearby to a busy railway station, road and fuel station.

Material Consideration - Relevant Appeal Decision

- 3.5 Regard has been had to the Planning Inspectorate’s decision dated 1 May 2026 concerning Appeals APP/U3935/W/25/3376716 and APP/U3935/Z/25/3376506 at Regent Circus, Swindon. The appeals related to the installation of a communications hub incorporating two illuminated digital advertisement screens and were allowed following consideration of their effects on public safety and visual amenity. While the circumstances and scale of that proposal differ from the current application, the Inspector’s assessment provides a relevant and recent example of the approach taken to illuminated digital advertisements within a busy urban environment.
- 3.6 In considering public safety, the Inspector concluded that the digital advertisements would be unlikely to distract drivers or obscure views of, or from, nearby pedestrian crossings. In relation to visual amenity, the Inspector found that the advertisements would be viewed against a varied commercial backdrop containing existing signage and street furniture and would not appear incongruous or harmful. The Inspector also concluded that illumination could be satisfactorily controlled by condition, together with restrictions

preventing flashing, moving images and animated transitions and controlling the frequency of display changes.

- 3.7 The current proposal similarly occupies an established and visually active transport corridor containing railway and highway infrastructure, commercial activity, street lighting and an existing advertisement display. The proposal would replace that long-established display without materially altering its location, scale or orientation. It would display static images only, with no animation, video, flashing images or scrolling text, and its illumination would be controlled in accordance with current industry guidance. The appeal decision therefore supports the principle that a digital advertisement can be acceptable in an active urban setting where its siting, illumination and method of operation are appropriately controlled and where it would not interfere with highway visibility or the safe use of the highway.

4.0 Advertisement Amenity and Public Safety

Amenity

- 4.1 The impact on visual amenity is evaluated based on the character of the area, considering factors such as surrounding land uses and the existing built environment. The assessment focuses on how the proposed advertisement affects local character and any notable features of interest in the area.
- 4.2 The proposed replacement of the long-established static advertisement on Bath Road introduces a change from a traditional printed advertisement to a digitally illuminated display, and therefore its effect on amenity must be carefully considered. While the existing advert has been present for over two decades and is well integrated into a streetscape characterised by commercial businesses, transport infrastructure and residential dwellings, the introduction of an internally illuminated digital LED screen would alter its visual presence, hence the requirement for an updated advertisement consent.
- 4.3 At Bath Road railway bridge the surrounding environment is characterised by substantial transport infrastructure, highway signage, street lighting, railway infrastructure and nearby commercial development. A residential property is also present on the opposite side of Bath Road, with the nearest dwelling located approximately 26m from the advertisement. The advertisement would therefore be viewed within a visually active setting rather than a predominantly residential environment.
- 4.4 The advertisement would still have the same existing views outside the enclosed station land. This represents a continuation of existing viewing experience rather than any noticeable intensification. With appropriate controls on luminance, static imagery, and transitions, the digital display would operate in a similar way to the sheet advertisement causing no undue harm to amenity but with the addition to be able to change the adverts electronically. The proposal to include a digital element will also not alter the size, scale, massing, position, or appearance of the existing advertising display.
- 4.5 The display would operate in accordance with industry standard controls relating to luminance levels, automatic brightness adjustment and advertisement dwell times. These measures ensure that the advertisement responds to ambient lighting conditions and does not appear excessively bright or visually intrusive during hours of darkness. The display would therefore not result in material harm to the amenity of nearby occupiers or the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Public Safety

- 4.6 With regard to public safety, Regulation 3 of the advertisement Act recognises that advertisements are intended to attract attention and that such concerns are generally less acute in busy commercial environments or areas associated with retail activity. Bath Road, station bridge sits within an active urban setting where drivers and pedestrians naturally expect to encounter commercial displays. The proposed digital advertisement, while replacing an existing similar sized advert display, would therefore not present an unexpected or abnormal visual stimulus in this context.
- 4.7 The display would not impede visibility along Bath Road, obscure any traffic signals, road signs, pedestrian crossing facilities or other highway safety infrastructure. Drivers approaching and passing the site would retain clear visibility of the carriageway, junction layout and associated traffic management measures.
- 4.8 The proposal would not alter the physical dimensions, position or orientation of the existing advertising structure and therefore would not introduce any new obstruction within the highway environment. The principal change relates solely to the replacement of a static advertisement with a digitally illuminated display. Having regard to the established character of the surrounding highway environment, the controlled operation of the digital display and the absence of any interference with traffic signs or signals, it is not considered likely to distract road users to an extent that would adversely affect the safe operation of the highway network.
- 4.9 Accordingly, the proposal is considered to have a negligible impact on highway and public safety.
- 4.10 Should the Local Planning Authority consider it necessary to control elements such as lighting, transitions or any other details we consider these could be effectively controlled through suitably worded planning condition to ensure the proposals do not adversely interfere with the ability of road users or pedestrians to exercise proper care and attention.
- 4.11 For the reasons set out above, the proposal is considered acceptable having regard to the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007 (as amended) and the relevant policies of Wiltshire Local Plan. The proposal would preserve visual amenity and would not give rise to any unacceptable impacts on public safety. Advertisement consent should therefore be granted.

We look forward to receiving confirmation that the proposals meet the requirements for advertisement consent to be granted.

Yours faithfully,



Lisa Bullock MRTPI

Senior Town Planner, Western Route