



BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET

Advertisements and Illuminations

PLANNING SERVICES



The purpose of this leaflet is to provide supplementary planning guidance, to outline the Council's approach toward advertising and to promote good practice. All applications for consent will be considered against policies contained in the relevant local plan. It is also the Council's intention to promote rather than frustrate commercial interests wherever possible, and to provide constructive assistance.

This guidance is by no means exhaustive and it should be recognised that buildings and areas vary greatly. Therefore what is acceptable in one location might not be suitable in another. The following guidance should be seen as establishing best practice in relation to any proposals for signage in the district irrespective of the need for consent and establishing principles that apply to the special characteristics of listed buildings.

The Need for Consent

The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992 (as amended) state the circumstances in which an application for consent is required. The Regulations are complex and not easily summarised. This guidance is therefore not intended to give an indication of the need for consent in every case. In addition, some advertisements will benefit from deemed consent by virtue of the Regulations and will not require a formal application to the Council. However, if the Council considers an advert to be inappropriate it can take action to secure its removal.

All applicants are strongly advised to contact the Development Control section to establish whether advertisement consent is required for each proposal, and whether proposed signs are considered appropriate. Adverts on listed buildings will almost always require Listed Building Consent.

This guidance relates to advertising only. Separate advice on the design of shopfronts is contained in previously published guidance, listed at the end of this note.

Types of Signage

Fascia Boards

The preferred method of advertising on shopfronts is usually to sign-write the fascia board, characteristically located above a display window or entrance. Fascia boards should be an integral part of the shopfront design, and it will not always be appropriate to introduce a fascia to a building that does not have one. Lettering upon the fascia should preferably be traditionally sign-written or applied individual letters on minimal pins. The fixing of new fascia boards over the original is unlikely to be acceptable, and materials should always reflect and respect the character of the building. There will usually be a preference for natural materials. Lettering should relate to the character of the shop and the business to which it relates, and should

avoid being excessive in size or extent. The use of a standardised national fascia sign may not always be acceptable, and national chains must recognise that the imposition of house styles will not always be possible, especially on listed buildings or within a Conservation Area. Where no fascia exists, the use of fixed individual letters may be an alternative. Many fascia signs, especially if non-illuminated, will benefit from deemed consent.

Projecting and Hanging Signs

Painted timber hanging signs with moulded edging and hanging symbols are a traditional means of advertising. The use of quality hanging signs on narrow streets can contribute much interest to the street scene and can be a readily seen form of effective advertising. However, on broad streets, hanging signs may clutter formal building lines, be less readily visible and detract from the general appearance of the street. Hanging signs will therefore not be appropriate in some streets. The position of hanging signs in relation to the elevation of the building is important, usually being at fascia level. Brackets should be well designed and not an afterthought. It should be ensured that sufficient head height clearance (2.4m being the guidance height) is achieved. Materials should again reflect the building's character and a high standard of design will be expected. Fixed projecting signs will rarely be acceptable, especially on listed buildings. Many hanging signs, if non-illuminated and at fascia level, will benefit from deemed consent.

Blinds and Canopies

Blinds and canopies are often used as a form of advertising supporting lettering or logos and may benefit from deemed consent. The Council's adopted Shopfront Guidelines give indications as to the type of blinds that are likely to be appropriate. Generally, modern style plastic Dutch blinds are unlikely to be appropriate especially on historic buildings, where traditional canvas blinds which fully retract into the fascia are preferred. Where designed as an integral part of the shopfront, the use of internal blinds as an alternative means of shading and advertising may be considered appropriate. Plain blinds which do not support lettering will require Planning Permission.

Window Lettering

A possible method of advertising is the application of lettering on the inside of windows. Traditional glass etching has largely been superseded by applied stickers. This method may be considered where more conventional methods are not appropriate, for instance on buildings without fascias. Window lettering should be discreet and writing kept to a minimum. In the majority of cases window lettering will benefit from deemed consent.

Name Plates on Commercial Premises

Where buildings with a domestic elevation are now used for commercial or professional office purposes, the most acceptable form of external sign is usually a small brass name plate. In some instances this may be used in conjunction with discreet window lettering. The size of the name plate should be related to the space available at the side of the entrance door. The available space may be limited by features such as rustication of stone courses, and signs should not extend without regard across such features. Several businesses sharing a building should also consider sharing a name plate. Many such signs will benefit from deemed consent.

'A' Boards

'A' boards are free-standing signs which usually sit on the pavement or forecourt outside the building to which they relate. Because of this they may be seen as useful advertising methods for buildings unable to accommodate more conventional signage. Applicants are advised to contact the Highways Department with regard to siting. There will be many instances where they are not acceptable, particularly where they are likely to cause a potential hazard for pedestrians, especially the visually impaired, or are distant from the business to which they relate.

Others

Forms of advertising not mentioned above include brass stall (cill) plates, mosaic floor details, signs painted directly onto masonry, models, devices, gimmicks, flags and exterior parasols to tables and chairs. By its very nature this type of advertising will be highly individual and assessed on its merits. The need for consent will similarly vary widely. There will however be a presumption against the painting of masonry and adverts on railings. Artistic creativity will not be discouraged where it makes a positive contribution to the street scene and character of the area.

Pubs

The character of historic and attractive public houses can be detrimentally affected by the plethora of lights and signs often favoured by breweries. As with other types of advertising, standard house styles are usually only acceptable if their design, size and the materials of their construction respect the character of the building. Signs should be kept to a minimum. It is generally only necessary to advertise the name of the premises, and additional signage listing all facilities and services may be considered excessive. Similarly, the repetition of brewery names and logos can produce unnecessary visual clutter. Brewery names should be limited to the hanging sign and perhaps a small logo on the wall near the front door. The brewery name of large chains should not reduce the individuality of the building by being over dominant.

Traditional timber hanging signs on blacksmith forged brackets of good design will generally be encouraged in appropriate locations. Modern standard signs which are often oversized and not pictorial on poorly welded brackets are less acceptable. Free standing, hanging or post signs can be equally appropriate in certain locations. Again design will be important, and the inclusion of superfluous curly ironwork around the sign is a particularly inappropriate modern fashion for historic buildings.

Lighting should be kept to a minimum. Illumination will normally only be encouraged on a hanging or post sign and around the building entrance (often by illuminating the inside of the entrance hall to provide a warm welcoming glow). Discreet, subtle lighting should be used in preference to visually intrusive swan-neck or halogen lights on stalks. The domestic character of upper floors should be preserved.

Modern public houses can present a wide variety of different architectural styles and applications for consent will be treated on their merits. The majority of signs on pubs will require advertisement consent.

Garages (Petrol Filling Stations and Car Showrooms, etc)

Garages can potentially require a large amount of signage which often includes pole or totem signs, and are usually modern in design. Many garages are located on principal roads, and often support many separate businesses (filling station, showroom, repair workshop, etc). As such the potential for an excessive number of incompatible signs on a garage forecourt is great. In order to protect the appearance of the area in which the garage is located the Council would require new signage to be approached in a co-ordinated way, with a minimum number included, illumination kept to a discreet level, and with pole signs kept to a minimum height. Applicants should be aware that corporate signs may need to be tailored to suit the circumstances of each site, especially where inside a Conservation Area. Visibility out of the garage forecourt must also be maintained. Most signs on garage premises will require consent.

Guest House and Bed & Breakfast Signs

The majority of signs relating to guest houses (if non-illuminated) will benefit from deemed consent. Such signs will often appear most appropriate if kept to a minimal size, sufficient to allow ease of reading. Depending on the specific location it can be appropriate to locate a sign on a free-standing post, on the building itself, or on a gate or front wall. Provided that the residential character of the area is maintained, discreet and subtle illumination may be acceptable in some locations, and will require consent.

Free-Standing Advertising Hoardings

These are only likely to be acceptable where they are used to screen a vacant site as a short term measure or to screen a building site. Otherwise hoardings will only be considered acceptable in predominantly commercial or industrial locations where the amenities of any nearby residents will not be affected adversely and where the display itself preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the area.

Associated works including planting and hard surfacing at the base of the hoarding should also be considered and included in any scheme to enhance the appearance of the site. Such works may require planning permission.

Consent will be required for hoardings unless constructed around building sites outside a Conservation Area or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty where they may benefit from deemed consent.

Cross-Street Banners

Separate guidance on this subject has been produced. Development Control should be approached regarding proposed banners. The majority of cross-street banners will require consent.

Off Site Signage

Off site or 'advance warning' signs will rarely be acceptable, especially within the open countryside, Green Belt or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Such signs, which are detached from the site to which they relate, will almost always require consent.

Illumination and Floodlighting

Illumination

The illumination of shopfronts and signage within well-lit town centres is generally considered unnecessary. Internally illuminated box fascias or projecting box signs will rarely be acceptable, but where such signs are appropriate they should be designed so that only the lettering is illuminated. The light source should be an integrated element of the overall design or as discreet as possible. Prominent spotlights or 'swan neck' lamps should be avoided and if spotlights are to be acceptable they should be as small as possible and appear as an integral part of the sign. It is not only the effect upon individual buildings but the cumulative problem of light spill which must be considered. Interior lighting should also be given careful consideration, as inappropriate interior signs such as neon lettering can be extremely prominent. Many illuminated signs will require consent, especially if within a conservation area. Separate guidance on illumination in general has been produced.

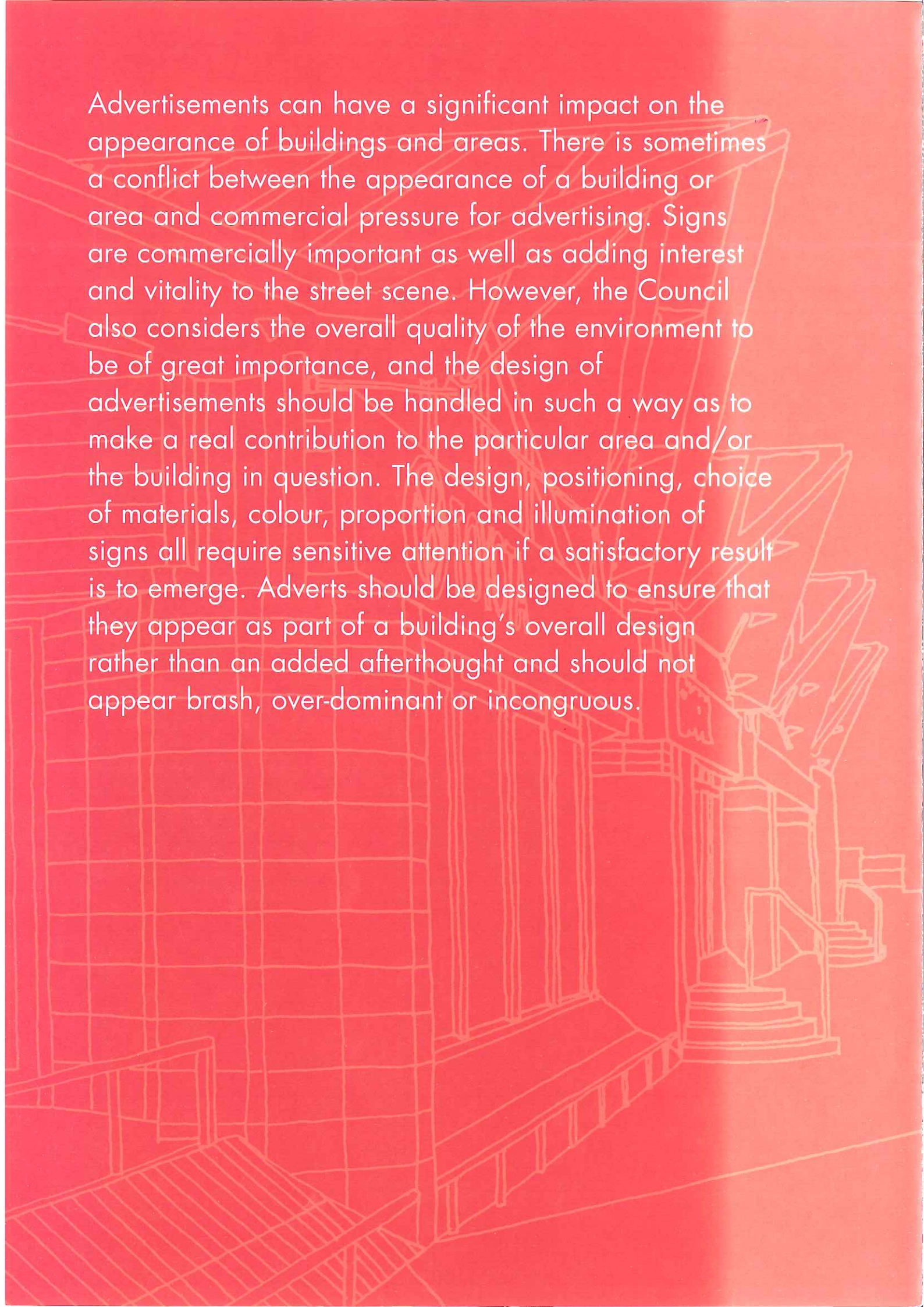
Floodlighting

Floodlighting of buildings will rarely be considered acceptable unless used to highlight an architectural 'set piece' building and designed to project a subtle glow on to the building from a discreet or hidden light source. Light spill should be avoided and the amenities of nearby residents respected. In many cases planning permission will be required.

Conclusion

It is impossible to list and comment upon all forms of advertising in a document of this size. However, this guidance is designed to outline the Council's general approach toward advertising and to promote good practice. Due to the complexity of the regulations it is again stressed that applicants contact the appropriate section, listed below, with regard to the need for consents.

Advertisements can have a significant impact on the appearance of buildings and areas. There is sometimes a conflict between the appearance of a building or area and commercial pressure for advertising. Signs are commercially important as well as adding interest and vitality to the street scene. However, the Council also considers the overall quality of the environment to be of great importance, and the design of advertisements should be handled in such a way as to make a real contribution to the particular area and/or the building in question. The design, positioning, choice of materials, colour, proportion and illumination of signs all require sensitive attention if a satisfactory result is to emerge. Adverts should be designed to ensure that they appear as part of a building's overall design rather than an added afterthought and should not appear brash, over-dominant or incongruous.



Associated Documents & Further Reading:

- 1 Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992.
- 2 Bath Local Plan. Adopted 1997. Especially policies C1, C2, C4, C22, C23.
- 3 Wansdyke Local Plan (Deposit 1995). Especially policies CH1, CH4, CH12, CH13.
- 4 Wansdyke Environs of Bath Local Plan (Adopted 1990) and Avon County Structure Plan 3rd Alteration (Adopted July 1994).
- 5 Planning Policy Guidance Notes 15 and 19. Available from HMSO.
- 6 Bath Shopfronts, Guidelines for Design and Conservation. Bath City Council 1993.
- 7 English Historic Towns Forum: Book of Details and Good Practice in Shopfront Design 1993.
- 8 Institute of Lighting Engineers. Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Light Pollution 1995.
- 9 External Lighting, A Guide For Applicants. Bath & North East Somerset Council Policy Section 1997.

Since adoption of this document the Bath & North East Somerset Local Plan has been progressed to revised deposit stage (October 2003) and approved for development control purposes. Policies BH17, BH18, BH19 and BH20 are relevant to advertisements.

Contact Planning Services for advice

Bath & North East Somerset Council's Planning Services is happy to give advice.

For information on planning permission and advertisement consent, contact:

Planning Officers 01225 394100

For information on listed building consent:

Historic Buildings Team 01225 477547

Both of the above teams are located at:

Planning Services
Trimbridge House
Trim Street
Bath
BA1 2DP

This guidance note was endorsed as Supplementary Planning Guidance by the Planning, Transportation & Environment Committee on 1 October 1998. Details of the extensive consultation undertaken are available on request. Re-printed in 2003 by the Projects and Partnerships Team, Planning Services 01225 477583.



BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET



Printed on recycled paper

We are committed to providing accessible information for everyone.
Please let us know how we can meet your access requirements.