

Delegated Decision Report

Application No:	25/0814	Statutory Period Expires:	25th November 2025
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Site:	33 High Street Newport South Wales NP20 1GH		
Proposal:	ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT FOR THE INSTALLATION OF AN INTERACTIVE COMMUNICATION HUB UNIT WITH INTEGRAL ADVERTISEMENT DISPLAY, DEFIBRILLATOR AND CITY WAYFINDING		
Applicant:	N Still		
Type:	Advert Consent	Ward:	Stow Hill
Decision:	Refused		

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The application comprises of a series of applications for the implementation of a Communications Kiosk and Advertising Display in various within Newport City Centre.
- 1.2 A similar application for development in this location was previously refused under ref.25/0419. Although there are some minor differences between the current proposal and the earlier scheme, the site circumstances and the principle of development remain unchanged. As such, the current application is assessed in the same manner as the previous refusal.

2. SITE LOCATION AND CONTEXT

- 2.1 The application site comprises of a hard surfaced area of public realm outside 33 High Street. The Communications kiosk would be sited at the end of a parking/loading bay perpendicular to the road. The Advertisement screen would be on the rear of the kiosk, facing to the north of High Street. The site is along one of the main historic thoroughfares leading to a junction from High Street to Commercial Street, Bridge Street, Skinner Street and Stow Hill. The site is within the close proximity of a number of listed buildings and is sited within the Town Centre Conservation Area and an Archaeologically Sensitive Area.

3. DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 The application seeks advertisement consent for an advertisement display screen, which would be placed on a communications kiosk. The advertisement display screen would be 1.895m in height and 1.065m in width.
- 3.2 The associated application for the communications kiosk itself is being considered under application 25/0813.

4. RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

App Number	Proposal	Decision	Decision Date
25/0813	INSTALLATION OF AN INTERACTIVE COMMUNICATION HUB UNIT WITH INTEGRAL ADVERTISEMENT DISPLAY, DEFIBRILLATOR AND CITY WAYFINDING	Pending Consideration	N/A

5. PLANNING POLICY

- 5.1 THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK: FUTURE WALES - THE NATIONAL PLAN 2040

Future Wales sets out the Welsh Government's land use priorities and provides a national land use framework for SDPs and LDPs. Future Wales concentrates on development and land use issues of national significance, indicating areas of major opportunities and change, highlighting areas that need protecting and enhancing and helping to co-ordinate the

delivery of Welsh Government policies to maximise positive outcomes.

Policy 1 - Where Wales Will Grow

Policy 2 - Shaping Urban Growth and Regeneration - Strategic Placemaking

Policy 9 - Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure

Policy 13 – Supporting Digital Communications

5.2 PLANNING POLICY WALES (EDITION 12) 2024

3.3 - Good design is fundamental to creating sustainable places where people want to live, work and socialise.

3.4 - Meeting the objectives of good design should be the aim of all those involved in the development process and should be applied to all development proposals at all scales.

4.1.6 Planning authorities must set out in their development plan an integrated planning and transport strategy. This should set out how the planning authority will: improve physical and digital connectivity

5.3 NEWPORT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (2011-2026)

5.3.1 Policies GP2 (General Amenity), GP4 (Highways and Access), GP6 (Quality of Design) and CE7 (Conservation Areas) of the Newport Local Development Plan 2011-2026 (Adopted January 2015) are relevant to the determination of this application.

5.4 TECHNICAL ADVICE NOTES

5.4.1 Technical Advice Note (TAN) 5: Nature Conservation And Planning, Technical Advice Note (TAN) 7: Outdoor Advertisement Control and Technical Advice Note (TAN) 24: The Historic Environment are relevant to the determination of this application.

5.5 THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (CONTROL OF ADVERTISEMENTS) REGULATIONS 1992

5.6 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT (WALES) ACT 2023

5.7 Consideration has been given to the following document(s) in the assessment of this application: Managing Conservation Areas in Wales (CADW).

5.8 Consideration has also been given to the Newport City Centre Conservation Area Appraisal (April 2018).

6. CONSULTATION RESPONSES

6.1 **Principal Heritage Officer:** We have previously refused a similar application for this location under apps 25/0418 & 25/0419.

The proposed is a 2.6m in height and 1.3m wide 'Communication Hub' unit, featuring on one side an 86" screen and on the other a 32" touchscreen. It is proposed to be located outside 33 High Street, within the Town Centre Conservation Area (CA).

According to the Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA) (April 2018), *'High Street is one of the principal thoroughfares through the Town Centre Conservation Area'*, originating from the earliest medieval layout of the settlement. Here, a key architectural characteristic of the Conservation Area is the distinctive groups of buildings behind a unified elevation. Those on the High Street are especially notable for the sheer size of the elevations, further enhanced by the tightly compacted streetscape. The CAA identifies 'Important Views', both north and south along High Street.

In addition, it states that:

'Corner buildings are among the most prominent in the Conservation Area, especially on Commercial Street where there are a number of junctions with secondary thoroughfares. Clock towers, turrets and protruding bays are common features on these buildings, making them prominent markers within the streetscape and the visual flow from one street to another smoother.'

This is particularly true of those buildings which overlook the expansive junction of High Street, Commercial Street, Bridge Street, Skinner Street and Stow Hill, located directly to the south of the proposed. The ornate buildings which surround this junction, a number of which are GII Listed (see below), make for perhaps the most spectacular vista within the Conservation Area as one approaches both south via the High Street, and north via Commercial Street. Accordingly, views south from the southern end of High Street, and views north from the northern end of Commercial Street (both of which overlook this expansive junction) are identified as 'Important Vistas' within the CAA.

The broad area of pavement upon which the 'hub' is proposed is relatively uncluttered by street furniture and the advertising, branding, and fascia signs present on nearby buildings in retail and commercial use at ground-floor level is predominantly refined and notably visually restrained in appearance. The site contributes to the significance of the conservation area primarily by its function as part of the wider pavement area which provides a relatively uncluttered space which affords clear southerly views of the architecturally impressive buildings which surround the junction. It also allows for uninterrupted appreciation of that identified 'important view' north along the more tightly compacted High Street.

The proposed 'Communication Hub' would be a tall and wide structure in its context, with a rectangular block-like design. Due to its height and design (with illuminated screens), in its prominent location on this broad area of pavement, the proposed 'Hub' would be viewed as an imposing and visually incongruous item of street furniture which would unduly detract from the fine examples of high-quality architecture and the visually restrained and aesthetically-pleasing facades and mostly restrained fascia signage present on the commercial and retail frontages near the site. Moreover, due to its large scale in comparison with most other items of nearby street furniture (bollards) it would serve to add visual clutter to the street scene.

The proposed will intrude directly into those important views north from the southern end of Commercial Street and the channelled northerly view along High Street, presenting an illuminated 86" screen which would distract from said views - and from views of the historic assets which overlook the wide junction (including Grade II Listed National Westminster Bank (including Nos.2 & 4 Cambrian Road), 31, 32, 33 High Street, including 2a & 2-4 Skinner Street) and those which line High Street (34 & 35 High Street, 27-30 High Street (Consecutive and including 27a)).

Within views from the southern end of High Street, the proposed will intrude directly into the 'Important Vista', with a 32" digital screen. This southern view from the end of High Street also provides key view longer-range view of the Grade II Listed Westgate Hotel from the north, where it is framed by the tall buildings which flank the narrow street – a setting which contributes strongly towards its significance. Indeed, the asset is *"Listed as elaborate large scale Victorian hotel on a prominent site whose architecture makes an important contribution to Newport's most important commercial street, and the conservation area."* The proposed will intrude directly into this key view of the asset. Similarly, the prominent setting of the GII Listed HSBC (formerly Midland Bank), to the opposite side of the junction, will also be impacted.

It is concluded that there will be considerable harm to both the character and appearance of the Town Centre Conservation area, and the setting of nearby Listed assets by virtue of the visual interruption, distraction and additional street clutter and bright illuminated signage will bring. This is contrary to HEWA 2023, TCPA 1990, PPW12 and the aims of the Newport Local Development Plan 2011 – 2026.

6.2 **Highways:**

The proposal does not replace an existing phone and is not needed to maintain any telecoms services. It does not establish any need for the various features to be placed on highway in this location and does not provide any benefit that outweighs the consideration of pedestrians.

The site is a pedestrian dominated area, and very much a shopping centre type environment where pedestrians do not follow obvious linear desire lines but move unpredictable across or along this and adjacent roads. Furthermore, they do not simply walk through the area, but stop to talk and undertake other social activities. It is adjacent to a servicing area, so a high percentage of the traffic is commercial, therefore drivers have greater issues with visibility and blind spots etc. and do not mix easily with pedestrians.

The positioning of the advert creates a blind spot between drivers and pedestrians, preventing any inter-visibility and increasing the risk of collisions between any pedestrians crossing and on-coming vehicles. Drivers and pedestrians may not be aware of the other's presence in time to avoid a collision.

It is also likely to interfere with the ready interpretation of road signs at the adjacent junction (specifically the give way sign) creating further safety issues. The advert is approximately 15m from the sign and appears to be in the driver's eyeline.

Nothing should distract or obscure the drivers' vision within 25m of the sign/junction to ensure they have sufficient time to react/stop. (The speed limit requires 25m forward visibility based on the stopping sight distance).

The general principles of balancing highway function and sense of place are presented within Manual for Streets (MfS) and MfS 2.

Section 2.4.10 MfS states:

"2.4.10 This way of looking at streets can be expressed as a two-dimensional hierarchy,¹¹ where the axes are defined in terms of place and movement (Fig. 2.5). It recognises that, whilst some streets are more important than others in terms of traffic flow, some are also more important than others in terms of their place function and deserve to be treated differently. This approach allows designers to break away from previous approaches to hierarchy, whereby street designs were only based on traffic considerations."

The town centre streets must provide for high levels of movement (albeit pedestrian and cycle movements mainly). At the same time, it must provide a strong sense of place to be attractive and have vitality.

The principles of decluttering and presenting an inclusive, coordinated street scene are made clear in MfS and MfS 2 and relevant excerpts can be found here:

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a7e0035ed915d74e6223743/pdfmanforstreets.pdf>

One key point to note is that the highway authority has a duty to ensure that it complies with the Disability Discrimination Act. This is discussed at s2.7 (p21) where the six principles are set out, including taking account of disabled persons' disabilities. Which requires them to consider any impacts of development placed on highway.

The matter of decluttering is addressed in s5.10, (p58) with recommendations to reduce and remove clutter at 9.1.9 (p115/6) and 10.2.1 (p121). Clearly where the issue of clutter has not yet become critical, it is vital to be mindful to avoid creating the problem. Avoidance is better than cure.

Whilst there is a need for various types of street furniture, it is essential to consider what is necessary and allocate space accordingly. Anything that is not strictly needed should not be placed on highway.

Section 6.1 (p63) states that street design should be inclusive: "providing for all people regardless of age or ability".

At 6.2 (p63) onwards, MfS discusses the requirements for pedestrians and cyclists. The key prerequisites are sufficient space (6.3.10 (p65) and 6.3.23 (p68)). The guidance includes a visual representation of how pedestrian densities and other activities influence the need for greater space. (refer to Figure 6.8 (p68) and Figure 6.9 (p69)).

We do not have volumetric surveys of pedestrian movements to present but do not consider it appropriate to think in terms of minimum widths for the town centre where

service vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists are mixed together, and movement patterns can be complex and growth should be accommodated.

6.3.10 (p65) states that all street furniture is a hazard for various disability groups. We must therefore only accept what is needed to minimise the hazards to disabled persons.

Further guidance for signage is contained within Traffic Signs Regulations 2016, however the only points to make are that signs should be consistent in presentation, located at key points and minimal in number for ease of interpretation.

“Inclusive Mobility, A Guide to Best Practice on Access to Pedestrian and Transport Infrastructure” is published by the Department for Transport (2021) and can be found here: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/61d32bb7d3bf7f1f72b5ffd2/inclusive-mobility-a-guide-to-best-practice-on-access-to-pedestrian-and-transport-infrastructure.pdf>

It states the following at Section 2.3 (p16):

“Planning for accessibility improvements

The accessibility of infrastructure can be much improved as part of on-going repairs, maintenance and modernisation schedules. Such improvements can be made at a lower cost and with less disruption than if the improvements are made separately. For example, resurfacing a footway may provide the opportunity to clear some of the clutter often found in the pedestrian environment, and so remove barriers to movement. Relevant staff should be made aware of the importance of doing this.

At 3.1 (p17) it goes on to state:

“3.1 Definitions

It is essential that design for disabled people should be to the highest possible standards. This section provides information on the basic human requirements for ease of movement. In designing or modifying facilities the aim should be to be generous in the allocation of space.”

Whilst the first statement does not refer directly to new development, it is clear that the principle of removing clutter is supported and therefore any additional clutter would not be supported. Indeed, it would be considered detrimental to the movement of all not just those with disabilities.

The second statement emphasises the need “to be generous with space”. Indeed, a theme of the document is to avoid working to minimal standards.

At section 4.2 (p28) it discusses the space requirements in more detail. It states:

“4.2 Width and height clearance

Footways and footpaths should be made as wide as is practicable, but under normal circumstances, a width of 2000mm is the minimum that should be provided, as this allows enough space for two wheelchair users to pass, even if they are using larger electric mobility scooters. If this is not feasible due to physical constraints, then a minimum width of 1500mm could be regarded as the minimum acceptable under most circumstances, as this should enable a wheelchair user and a walker to pass each other. Where there is an obstacle, such as lamp columns, sign posts or electric vehicle charging points, the absolute minimum width should be 1000mm, but the maximum length of such a restricted space should be 6 metres.”

It should be noted that the minimum width is quoted for use where there are constraints and not town centre levels of demand. A developer’s desire to install advertising is not a constraint. That could go somewhere else. Furthermore, we do not accept that any of the other benefits claimed would be significant enough to justify the narrowing of any pedestrian route (see later comments).

Street furniture is considered further at section 4.7 (p32):

“4.7 Street furniture

Street furniture refers to the many and varied objects located in a typical high street, precinct or footway, including streetlights, sign-posts, traffic signs, waste bins, bollards and seating. These usually have important functions and specific purposes: for example,

bollards positioned for reasons of security, or as traffic control measures, electric vehicle charge points, and sign-posts installed to provide public information.

Other items found in the pedestrian environment may have a purely commercial purpose. They include portable objects such as tables and chairs placed on footways adjacent to cafés, bars, pubs and restaurants. Free-standing advertising boards such as “A-boards” might also cause a hazard for pedestrians, particularly if their location is unpredictable and if the route around them is not clear and can be particularly problematic for vision impaired and other pedestrians who rely on a memorised ‘map’ of their environment to navigate, for long cane users, and for guide dogs.

Whatever their purpose, objects on routes used by pedestrians can present an obstacle and hazard, particularly wheelchair users and vision impaired people”.

Clearly, the benefits of street furniture must be weighed against the disbenefits. Highways do not accept that there are any significant benefits associated with the proposals to outweigh the issues faced by those with disabilities.

To mitigate for the potential issues the document goes on to state that:

“As a general design principle, any item of street furniture should be tonally and colour contrasted with its environment in order to make it as conspicuous as possible. Consideration should be given to choosing a finish that enables an object to be easily seen in its environment. For that reason, brushed metal finishes should be avoided”

Whilst it is possible to contrast the proposed furniture, making it “conspicuous” goes against the principles of creating a sense of place. For those reasons, we would not support anything that does not provide a necessary function within the highway.

In summary, Highways would raise objections relating to national policy on decluttering and inclusivity.

6.3 **Heneb:** No objection.

7. **PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS**

A site notice was put up on the 31st of October 2025. No representations were received.

8. **ASSESSMENT**

8.1 **Principle of Development**

8.1.1 The application site is located within a settlement boundary as defined by the proposals maps contained within the Newport Local Development Plan 2011 – 2026 (Adopted January 2015).

8.1.2 The Welsh Government Technical Advice Note 7 provides guidance on Outdoor advertisement control and states that applications for advertisement consent can only consider amenity and public safety. As such, the impact on visual/residential amenity and the effect on public safety are assessed as part of this application.

8.2 **Amenity**

8.2.1 The site is located within the Town Centre Conservation Area and close to several Listed Buildings. High Street is a key historic route, giving views in both north and south directions, toward the junction with Commercial Street, Stow Hill, and the Grade II Listed Westgate Hotel. Prominent corner buildings with turrets and clock towers defines this vista and contributes strongly to the character of the area. The proposed digital screen would interrupt these views, creating visual clutter and distraction particularly in the southern approach along High Street, and would fail to preserve or enhance both the Conservation Area and the setting of nearby listed buildings. A Design and Heritage Statement was submitted to assess the proposal’s impact, and while mitigating factors suggested by the heritage officer have been considered, the identified harm is considered to be significant and as such the mitigation would not outweigh the clear harm that the development would cause. Although public benefits such as a defibrillator and enhanced 4G coverage have been acknowledged, it is noted that several similar communications kiosks and advertisement screens have already been approved within the city centre, some within close proximity of the application site, as such it is considered that the area would be well served by such benefits and therefore the argument in favour of the development is lessened. The communications kiosk itself is unacceptable in this sensitive location, and by

association, the advertisement screen is also considered unacceptable. As such, the proposed structure is not appropriately scaled or consistent with the existing streetscape and causes unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the area, contrary to policies CE7 and GP6.

- 8.2.2 Illuminance levels from the screens have not been provided. However, given the distance to the nearest residential property, the fact that the installation is not at upper floor level, and its alignment with existing street paraphernalia such as lighting columns and signage, it is anticipated that the proposed arrangement would result in a worse lighting impact than the existing situation. No unacceptable impact on the residential amenity of nearby residential occupiers has been identified, in accordance with policy GP2.

8.3 **Public Safety**

- 8.3.1 The Highways Officer initially raised concerns regarding street clutter and the potential impact on both vehicle and pedestrian safety. The proposed location is at a junction on High Street, adjacent to the end of a taxi rank and servicing area, and forms part of a key pedestrian route into the main shopping area of the city centre. This area is heavily pedestrianised, with no clearly defined walking routes, leading to unpredictable pedestrian movement. The siting of the communications kiosk and associated advertisement screen in this location would introduce a visual obstruction at a potentially busy crossing point, reducing inter-visibility between drivers and pedestrians and increasing the risk of collisions. The Highways Officer has advised that a 25-metre visibility distance is required at this junction to allow for safe stopping if there were to be pedestrians crossing and any obstruction or distraction within this area, therefore presents a significant highway safety concern.

9. **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

9.1 ***Crime and Disorder Act 1998***

Section 17(1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 imposes a duty on the Local Authority to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. This duty has been considered in the evaluation of this application. It is considered that there would be no significant or unacceptable increase in crime and disorder as a result of the proposed decision.

9.2 ***Equality Act 2010***

The Equality Act 2010 identifies a number of 'protected characteristics', namely age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation; marriage and civil partnership.

- 9.3 Having due regard to advancing equality involves:

- removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics;
- taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these differ from the need of other people; and
- encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

- 9.4 The above duty has been given due consideration in the determination of this application. It is considered that there would be no significant or unacceptable impact upon persons who share a protected characteristic, over and above any other person, as a result of the proposed decision.

9.5 ***Planning (Wales) Act 2015 (Welsh language)***

Section 31 of the Act clarifies that impacts on the Welsh language may be a consideration when taking decisions on applications for planning permission so far as it is material to the application. This duty has been given due consideration in the determination of this application. It is considered that there would be no material effect upon the use of the Welsh language in Newport as a result of the proposed decision.

9.6 Newport's Well-Being Plan 2018-23

The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 imposes a duty on public bodies to carry out sustainable development in accordance with the sustainable development principle to act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This duty has been considered during the preparation of Newport's Well-Being Plan 2018-23, which was signed off on 1 May 2018. The duty imposed by the Act together with the goals and objectives of Newport's Well-Being Plan 2018-23 have been considered in the evaluation of this application. It is considered that there would be no significant or unacceptable impact upon the achievement of wellbeing objectives as a result of the proposed decision.

10. CONCLUSION

- 10.1 The proposed development would result in an unacceptable level of harm to the character and appearance of the Town Centre Conservation Area and to the setting of the nearby Listed Buildings failing the preserve or enhance test as set out in section 6.1 of Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment. Additionally, the development would have an unacceptable impact upon highway and pedestrian safety by means of its size and position on a busy interchange within the city centre. The clear harm that would arise from the proposed development outweighs the need or any benefit for the communications kiosk in this location. Consent has already been granted for a number of similar schemes across the City Centre. This also diminishes the justification for an additional kiosk in the proposed location.

11. RECOMMENDATION

REFUSED

01 The proposed development would have a harmful impact on heritage assets of recognised importance, specifically the character and appearance of the nearby Listed Buildings, and would fail to preserve or enhance the Town Centre Conservation Area, by reason of its scale and siting would result in visual interruption, distraction and additional street clutter. As such, the proposal is contrary to Policy GP6 and CE7 of the Newport Local Development Plan 2011–2026 (Adopted January 2015), Planning Policy Wales 12, The Historic Environment (Wales) Act and Technical Advice Note (TAN) 24.

02 The proposed development by reason of its scale and siting would have a harmful impact on Highways Safety as the proposed communications kiosk and advert would obstruct intervisibility between pedestrians and vehicles, creating blind spots that will significantly increase the risk of collisions. As such, the proposal is contrary to policy GP4 of the Newport Local Development Plan 2011 (Adopted January 2015).

NOTE TO APPLICANT

01 The decision relates to the following plans: Appendix A - A02960 - Application Site Map and Visuals, Infocus Communication Hub - Newport City Council - Planning Heritage Statement 2_2, Infocus Communication Hub - Newport City Council - Planning Heritage Statement 1_2, Appendix E - Zoll 3 specs, Appendix D - Hub Management Plan, Appendix B - Hub Unit Spec

02 The development plan for Newport is the Newport Local Development Plan 2011 – 2026 (Adopted January 2015). Policies GP2, GP3, GP4, GP5, GP6, CE6 and CE7 were relevant to the determination of this application.

03 Due to the minor nature of the proposed development (including any demolition) and the location of the proposed development, it is considered that the proposals did not need to be screened under the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations.