



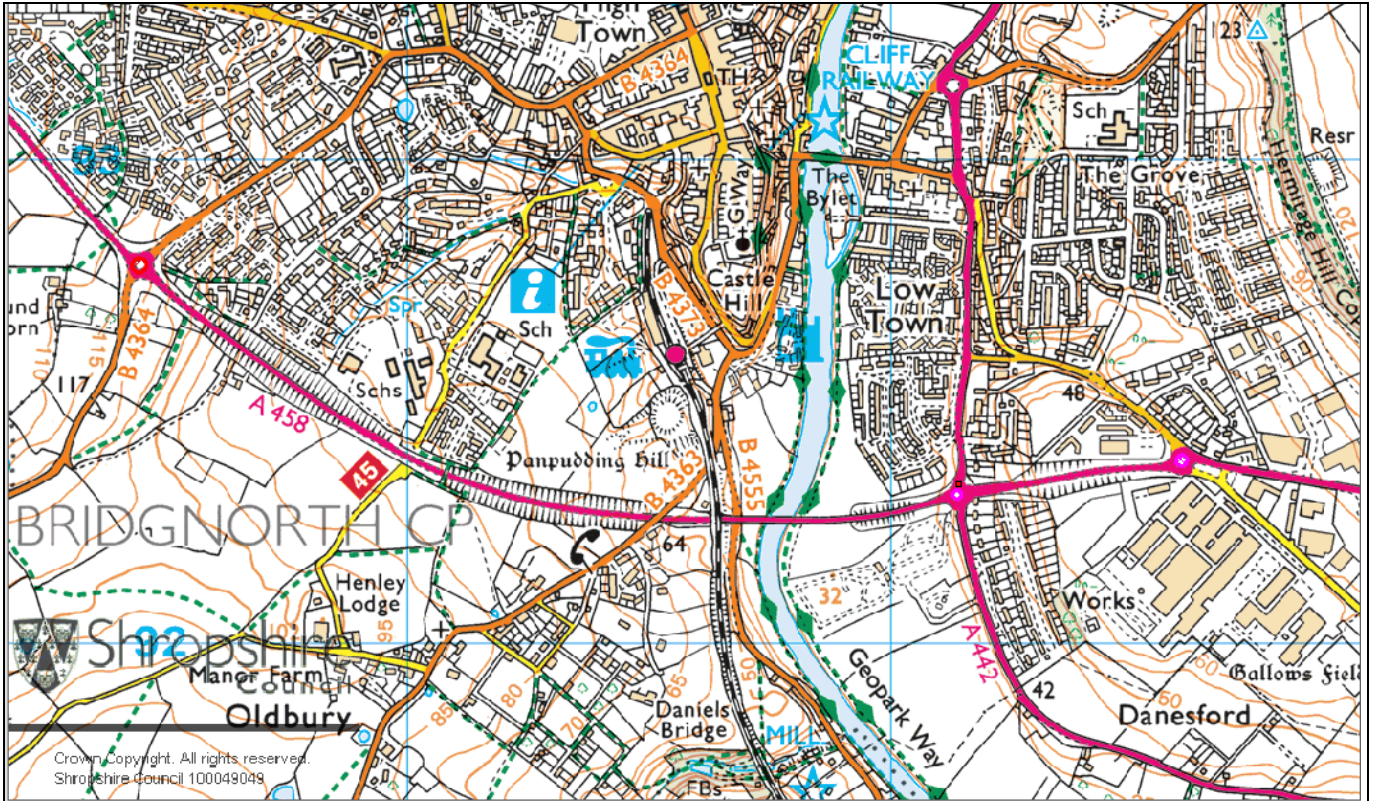
Committee and date  
**Southern Planning Committee**  
**15th November 2022**

## Development Management Report

Responsible Officer: Tracy Darke, Assistant Director of Economy & Place

### Summary of Application

<b><u>Application Number:</u></b> 22/03796/ADV	<b><u>Parish:</u></b>	Bridgnorth
<b><u>Proposal:</u></b> Erect and display 4No sponsorship signs placed on the A458 Stourbridge Road/Old Worcester Road Roundabout and 4No sponsorship signs on A458/A442 Kidderminster Road roundabout and 4No sponsorship signs on A458/B4364 Ludlow Road roundabout		
<b><u>Site Address:</u></b> A458 Stourbridge Road/Old Worcester Road Roundabout And A458/A442 Kidderminster Road Roundabout And A458/B4364 Ludlow Road Roundabout Bridgnorth Shropshire		
<b><u>Applicant:</u></b> CP Media		
<b><u>Case Officer:</u></b> Sara Jones	<b><u>email</u></b>	:
	sara.jones@shropshire.gov.uk	
<b><u>Grid Ref:</u></b> 372140 - 292332		



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**Recommendation:- Grant Permission subject to the conditions set out in Appendix 1.**

## REPORT

### 1.0 THE PROPOSAL

1.1 This is an advertisement application for the erection of four identical free standing sponsorship signs on behalf of Shropshire Council on three separate roundabouts in Bridgnorth. They are at the junction of :

- the A458 Stourbridge Road/Old Worcester Road (SHP038);
- the A458/A442 Kidderminster Road (SHP039); and
- the A458/B4364 Ludlow Road roundabout (SHP041).

The proposed signs would measure 1.2 metres wide by 0.55 metres tall and constructed from steel and aluminium with a powder coated finish with vinyl graphics applied. The sign is proposed to be attached onto two dark blue posts 450mm above ground level and to be positioned on the roundabouts facing traffic approaching from each direction. All sponsor plaques would be simple in

design and the designs approved in writing by Shropshire Council. The minimum length of sponsorship is 12 months and the branding on the signs would remain constant during this period.

## **2.0 SITE LOCATION/DESCRIPTION**

2.1 These existing large roundabouts are located within Bridgnorth on the various approach roads into the Town from the south, east and west. Taking the roundabouts in turn:

The A458 Stourbridge Road/Old Worcester Road (SHP038) – This roundabout is located at the eastern end of the Bridgnorth by-pass and to the southeast of the Aldi Stores. It is relatively flat with a grassed outer perimeter, beyond a relatively narrow hard surfaced perimeter and a landscaped centre. The roundabout has 3 existing signs located within the grassed area adjacent the existing highways structures.

The A458/A442 Kidderminster Road (SHP039) - This roundabout is located to the east of the River Severn and is slightly raised with a hard surfaced perimeter and a landscaped centre. The roundabout has 4 existing signs located within the perimeter of the inner landscaped area adjacent the existing highways structures. This roundabout is adjoined by existing residential development to the north and south and to an established caravan park to the southwest.

The A458/B4364 Ludlow Road roundabout (SHP041) – This roundabout is located at the western end of the Bridgnorth by-pass and is relatively flat with a grassed outer perimeter and a landscaped centre. The roundabout has 3 existing signs located within the grassed area adjacent the existing highways structures.

2.2 The existing signs which occupy the roundabouts are unauthorised, some of which were installed by Bridgnorth Town Council and have been on the roundabout more than many years.

## **3.0 REASON FOR COMMITTEE DETERMINATION OF APPLICATION**

3.1 This application is in relation to land owned by Shropshire Council which is not in line with a statutory function and therefore this application should be determined by committee.

## **4.0 COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIONS**

### **4.1 Consultee Comments**

4.1.1 **SC Highways** - No objection is raised on highway safety grounds subject to a site inspection by highways officers prior to the installation and removal of any existing unauthorised signs.

4.1.2 **SC Trees** - No objection on arboricultural grounds to the proposed installation of four sponsorship signs on each of the roundabouts, as shown on the submitted block plans. This position is, however, based on the assumption that the signs will be installed using individual post holes for the two supporting legs or struts of each sign, which can be hand dug and micro-positioned if necessary to avoid significant tree roots (ie roots greater than 25m diameter, or massed aggregations of fine roots). Consider it unlikely that any significant roots will be discovered, given the relatively young ages of the trees and the distance the signs are

to be installed from their stems. If, however, large scale excavations are planned or it is known that works are likely to cause damage to significant tree roots.

4.1.3 **Bridgnorth Town Council** - No objection in principle subject to the roundabouts in question being of sufficient size to display the signs without conflict with highways directional signage.

#### 4.2 **Public Comments**

4.2.1 No public representations have been received.

### 5.0 **THE MAIN ISSUES**

- Background & Policy
- Impact on Public Safety
- Impact on Visual Amenity
- Other Matters

### 6.0 **OFFICER APPRAISAL**

#### 6.1 **Background & Policy**

6.1.1 Local authority roundabout sponsorship or advertising schemes are now very common throughout the UK and Shropshire Council would like to offer local businesses the opportunity to advertise. Roundabout sponsorship is typically used by small to medium sized local business to raise their profile. It serves as a cost-effective way for them to promote themselves in high visibility locations for considerably less money than would otherwise be possible - helping boost the local economy. The income generated from advertising on Highway's assets will be reinvested in the Highways network.

6.1.2 The National Planning Policy Framework provides guidance on the display of advertisements, in particular paragraph 136 which states "*The quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed. A separate consent process within the planning system controls the display of advertisements, which should be operated in a way which is simple,*

*efficient and effective. Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts".* This is reflected in policy CS6 of Shropshire's Core Strategy and policy MD2 of the Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan.

6.1.3 This application has not been subject to any formal pre-application enquiry.

## 6.2 **Impact on Public Safety**

6.2.1 The proposed signs would be set back from the edge of each roundabout and clear views are available of traffic on or entering each roundabout. The Council Highways Manager is satisfied that the proposed signs would not be a significant distraction to drivers and that there would be no highway safety implications which could otherwise affect road users

## 6.3 **Impact on Visual Amenity**

6.3.1 The proposed signs are located on relatively large and will be visible to drivers as they approach each of the roundabouts. The signs are modest in size 1.2 metres wide by 0.55 metres tall (total sign area of 0.6 sqm) and will be low to the ground. There are existing street structures including, directional signs, bollards, lampposts, etc in and around the proximity of the roundabout.

6.3.2 The roundabouts are attractively landscaped, and the SC Tree Officer has been consulted on the application. As noted above the installation of the signage proposed is considered unlikely to have an adverse impact on the existing soft landscaping and the agent has confirmed that the signs would be installed using hand dug individual post holes approximately 150-200mm in diameter and some 400mm deep.

6.3.3 Due to the modest size and low profile of the signs they will not result in a significant visual impact on the street scene or character of the local area.

## 6.4 **Other Matters**

6.4.1 It is understood that the Bridgnorth Town Council have been maintaining these roundabouts for many years and that this was initially under license with Shropshire Council, although it appears that this agreement has now lapsed, and it would be the responsibility of Shropshire Council to now maintain the roundabouts. Whilst the responsibility for the maintenance of the roundabout is not a material planning consideration and as such this matter needs to be resolved outside of this advertisement application, it is understood that Members of the Planning Committee have previously raised concerns (under application 22/01698/ADV which returns to this Committee) about the potential renewal of the maintenance contract and to investigate cost/revenue benefits. The Council Business Development Manager has been in discussion with Bridgnorth Town Council regarding the transition of the advertising scheme currently run by the

Town Council. However, there is no contract currently in place for sponsorship on these roundabouts with Shropshire Council. Bridgnorth Town Council currently maintain these enhanced roundabouts, together with one other roundabout in the town (application 22/01698/ADV refers).

6.4.2 The sale price for allowing sponsorship advertising on roundabouts is estimated between £4,000 to £5,000 per year and will depend on the roundabout position and traffic flow. This payment will need to provide for the cost of manufacture and installation of the signs (year one only); 40% share retained by the sign company; payment of an enhanced maintenance for the roundabout; and a business rate payment. With signs provided at the minimum sale price year one would provide a revenue of 16.8% due to cost of sign purchase and installation. Although this would then increase to 37.4% from year two moving onwards. The payment for the enhanced maintenance for the roundabout will be transferred over to highways which will be added to their standard maintenance payment to Bridgnorth Town Council. This will allow the current enhanced maintenance to be provided.

## **7.0 CONCLUSION**

7.1 It is considered that the proposed signs will have no adverse impact on public safety and would have no significant adverse impact on the character and appearance of the site or the visual amenity of the locality. It is recommended that standard advertising conditions are attached to any approval notice issued. The proposed development meets the criteria of national guidance on advertisements and local plan policies CS6 and MD2.

7.2 In arriving at this decision, the Council has used its best endeavours to work with the applicants in a positive and proactive manner to secure an appropriate outcome as required in the National Planning Policy Framework.

## **8.0 RISK ASSESSMENT AND OPPORTUNITIES APPRAISAL**

### **8.1 Risk Management**

There are two principal risks associated with this recommendation as follows:

- As with any planning decision the applicant has a right of appeal if they disagree with the decision and/or the imposition of conditions. Costs can be awarded irrespective of the mechanism for hearing the appeal - written representations, a hearing or inquiry.
- The decision is challenged by way of a Judicial Review by a third party. The courts become involved when there is a misinterpretation or misapplication of policy or some breach of the rules of procedure or the principles of natural

justice. However, their role is to review the way the authorities reach decisions, rather than to make a decision on the planning issues themselves, although they will interfere where the decision is so unreasonable as to be irrational or perverse. Therefore, they are concerned with the legality of the decision, not its planning merits. A challenge by way of Judicial Review must be a) promptly and b) in any event not later than 6 weeks after the grounds to make the claim first arose first arose.

Both of these risks need to be balanced against the risk of not proceeding to determine the application. In this scenario there is also a right of appeal against non-determination for application for which costs can also be awarded.

## **8.2 Human Rights**

Article 8 give the right to respect for private and family life and First Protocol Article 1 allows for the peaceful enjoyment of possessions. These have to be balanced against the rights and freedoms of others and the orderly development of the County in the interests of the Community.

First Protocol Article 1 requires that the desires of landowners must be balanced against the impact on residents.

This legislation has been taken into account in arriving at the above recommendation.

## **8.3 Equalities**

The concern of planning law is to regulate the use of land in the interests of the public at large, rather than those of any particular group. Equality will be one of a number of 'relevant considerations' that need to be weighed in planning committee members' minds under section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1970.

## **9.0 Financial Implications**

9.1 There are likely financial implications of the decision and/or imposition of conditions if challenged by a planning appeal or judicial review. The costs of defending any decision will be met by the authority and will vary dependant on the scale and nature of the proposal. Local financial considerations are capable of being taken into account when determining this planning application – in so far as they are material to the application. The weight given to this issue is a matter for the decision maker.

10. Background

Relevant Planning Policies

Central Government Guidance:

West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy Policies:

Core Strategy and Saved Policies:

CS6 - Sustainable Design and Development Principles

CS17 - Environmental Networks

MD2 - Sustainable Design

MD12 - Natural Environment

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

None

11. Additional Information

View details online: <http://pa.shropshire.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=RGRU5NTDIBQ00>

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)
Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder) - Councillor Richard Marshall
Local Member  Cllr Christian Lea  Cllr Kirstie Hurst-Knight
Appendices APPENDIX 1 - Conditions



## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Conditions**

#### **STANDARD CONDITION(S)**

1. Any advertisement displayed, and any site used for the display of advertisements, shall be maintained in a condition that does not impair the visual amenity of the site.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007

2. Any structure or hoarding erected or used principally for the purpose of displaying advertisements shall be maintained in a condition that does not endanger the public.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

3. Where an advertisement is required under these Regulations to be removed, the site shall be left in a condition that does not endanger the public or impair visual amenity

Reason: To comply with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

4. No advertisement is to be displayed without the permission of the owner of the site or any other person with an interest in the site entitled to grant permission.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

5. No advertisement shall be sited or displayed so as to

(a) endanger persons using any highway, railway, waterway, dock, harbour or aerodrome (civil or military);

(b) obscure, or hinder the ready interpretation of, any traffic sign, railway signal or aid to navigation by water or air; or

(c) hinder the operation of any device used for the purpose of security or surveillance or for measuring the speed of any vehicle

Reason: To comply with the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

6. The development shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved plans, drawings and documents as listed in Schedule 1 below.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in

accordance with the approved plans and details.

**CONDITION(S) THAT REQUIRE APPROVAL BEFORE THE DEVELOPMENT COMMENCES**

7. Prior to the installation of the sponsorship signs a site inspection shall be undertaken with the Highways Authority to agree the layout of the signs in context with existing highway street furniture and landscaping. The agreed layout shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval and the sponsorship signs installed in accordance with the agreement. Prior to the installation of the sponsorship signs, any existing signs on the roundabout shall be permanently removed.

Reason: In the interest of highway safety and visual amenity.