

MC/13/2712

Date Received: 23 October, 2013

Location: Chatham Waterfront Pumping Station Globe Lane Chatham
Kent ME4 4SL

Proposal: Installation of a public outdoor television screen with a maximum size of 6m in length by 10m in width for information, advertisement and entertainment purposes for a temporary period of 5 years

Applicant: Medway Council

Agent:
Ward River

Recommendation of Officers to the Planning Committee, to be considered and determined by the Planning Committee at a meeting to be held on 4 December, 2013.

Recommendation - Temporary Approval

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be removed and land restored to its former condition on or before 5 years from the date of this decision notice.

Reason: To ensure that the permitted development does not prejudice proposals for redevelopment of the site in accordance with Policy BNE1 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 516/PL/01, 02 and 03 received 23 October 2013

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

- 3 The public television screen hereby permitted shall only operate between the hours of 06:00 to 00:00 Mondays to Sundays inclusive, including Public Holidays.

Reason: To regulate and control the permitted development in the interests of amenity in accordance with Policy BNE2 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

For the reasons for this recommendation for approval please see planning appraisal section and conclusions at the end of the report.

Proposal

The proposal is for the installation of a public television screen. The screen would be located on the pumping station approx. 7.8m above ground.

The screen including any speakers would measure a maximum of 10m in length, 6m in width and 1m in depth.

The applicants have stated that the screen would be used for displaying advertisements, information and entertainment between the hours of 06:00 – 00:00 (midnight) daily.

Relevant Planning History

MC/11/0167	Demolition of existing buildings and construction of 31 one and two bedroomed apartments, an 86 bedroomed hotel and 1,792 sqm commercial floorspace (Use classes A1 to A5, B1 (a) and D1) and ancillary parking Decision Approved subject to s106
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Representations

The application has been advertised on site and neighbour notification letters have been sent to the owner/occupiers of neighbouring properties and to Kent County Constabulary, Southern Water and English Heritage.

Kent Police have written advising that they have no immediate concerns, however, such large public television/advertising screens may attract unwanted attention from vandalism and metal thieves and they would recommend the following crime prevention measures:

- The screen appears to be of sufficient height from the public areas and the Archimedean screw pit area provides a defensible space between these and the screen. The height and defensible space may provide additional layers of security. Ideally we would recommend the use of a bespoke waterproof security enclosure, which is vandal resistant and alarmed. However we appreciate that this a very large 6m x 10m screen and that it may not be possible to purchase a stock security enclosure and that a bespoke security enclosure may have to be manufactured.

- We recommend that the exterior of the screen is protected with a polycarbonate screen (or similar, e.g. security enclosure) if possible, in order to protect it against missiles, graffiti, thrown paint etc. We would also advise that the screen and associated equipment are security marked with asset marking security tags, which if removed would leave marks, showing that it has been tampered with. Consider using branding type property marking, however, this may damage the appearance of items and should be used with care. We recommend that the screen and associated equipment be marked with forensic marking solutions (e.g. SmartWater, SelectaDNA, and RedWeb). Signage should be installed to indicate that forensic marking solutions are in use, signs can act as a deterrent.
- An accurate record of all serial numbers for the screen and associated equipment should be kept within an asset register. Photographs can also be included within the asset register to aid identification.
- Security of any exposed cables (e.g. Power, coax feed etc) should be considered. Cables should be installed within secured cable ducts where possible. It is also possible to mark cables with forensic marking solutions. Cables may also have identifying serial / production numbers printed on the sheathing, ideally these should be recorded in the asset register.
- The Planning Support Statement – Community Safety section states that; “There is also an existing network of CCTV cameras, maintained and monitored by Medway Council that will be further enhanced by the time the screen is installed.” We recommend that screen is covered by CCTV, particularly as it will be in position for 5 years. Local Authority CCTV cameras should cover the external screen as part of the camera(s) pre-set tour as a stopping/dwell point. Consider “parking the camera” on the screen when the camera is not in other use to cover other areas. It may be possible to alarm the CCTV security enclosure or the screen itself, with audible alarm or monitored alarm system, we recommend that you contact the Council’s alarm company for further advice.
- Crime prevention signage should be installed stating that the TV is security marked, covered by CCTV and alarmed etc. Install one-way security clutch screws and/or security fixings when installing the equipment, in order to prevent easy removal of the screen and/or associated equipment by thieves with standard readily available tools.

English Heritage have written to advise they do not wish to offer any comments on this occasion.

Development Plan

The Development Plan for the area comprises the Medway Local Plan 2003. The policies referred to within these documents and used in the processing of this application have been assessed against the National Planning Policy Framework, 2012 and are considered to conform.

Planning Appraisal

Street scene and design and effect on neighbour amenity

The proposed screen is very large; however, it would be set against the backdrop of a large pumping station, which is not attractive in appearance and does not contribute anything to the area itself. The screen is considered to be of a size, which would be in proportion to the scale of the surrounding buildings and would therefore not be harmful to design of the building or the wider area.

The screen would be in front of a large blank elevation of Chatham Pumping Station, which due to the nature of its function has a very bland and functional appearance. It is considered that not only will the screen provide essential useful information to visitors, but will also help to create a “buzz” to the area and enliven the character of that part of Chatham. The screen will be highly visible from the bus station and will allow bus users to be entertained while waiting for their bus and also serves to partially screen the blank façade of the pumping station.

Policies BNE1 and BNE2 of the Medway Local Plan 2003 seek to ensure that the amenities of existing residents and occupiers of properties are safeguarded. The application states that the hours of operation would be between 06:00 – 00:00 and so the screen would not be used during the night-time hours. The immediate area has limited residential occupancy with the closest being in Medway Street some 90m away and as such it is considered illumination during the night-time hours would not impact upon the amenity of the residents. Bearing in mind the predominantly commercial nature of the area within the vicinity of the application site and the siting of the screen relative to nearby premises, it is considered that there would be no harm to the amenities of the users or occupiers of adjacent properties.

It is acknowledged that there is an application on the adjacent sites for “Demolition of existing buildings and construction of 31 one and two bedroomed apartments, an 86 bedroomed hotel and 1,792 sqm commercial floorspace (Use classes A1 to A5, B1(a) and D1) and ancillary parking” that has been resolved to be approved subject to the signing of a s106 agreement. To ensure that the screen does not prejudice any further development on the site it is recommended that a temporary consent is given for 5 years.

Accordingly the proposal is considered acceptable and in accordance with policies BNE1, BNE2 and S5 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

Noise

The applicants have submitted a noise report and it is considered that the measurement and modelling of the noise has been conducted in such a manner as to provide a satisfactory noise assessment against the relevant noise guidance and standards.

The report recommends (Section 4.1) noise levels / decibel criterion for various hours of the day and night which must be achieved upon the screen deployment / commissioning to ensure that the likelihood of noise complaint is kept within acceptable levels.

As well as achieving the report recommendations in Section 4.1 the report also concludes that the speaker placement be reconsidered (shown in Figure 6 of the report Conclusions in Section 5). The placing of the speakers closer to the intended receivers will aid the project in achieving a clarity of noise generation during advertisement playback (to the intended local receivers) without placing undue stress on the noise spectrum (of the screen speakers) which could give rise to noise distortion from speakers placed further afield and set at a higher volume.

Notwithstanding this a condition is recommended to control the hours of use of use.

Highways

The screen is unlikely to cause any distraction to users of the public highway as it would be located away from the main through routes: whilst visible from Medway Street , traffic flows are moderate as this road terminates at the entrance to the bus station. Views of the screen would be clear from within the bus station and car park immediately adjacent to the site. Vehicle speeds in these locations should be 20mph or lower and therefore the risk to highway safety is considered to be small. Accordingly the proposal is considered acceptable with regard to the impacts on the highway and is in accord with policies T1, T3 and T13 of the Medway Local Plan 2003.

Other matters

The comments of Kent Police have been noted and passed to the applicants to take on board in the implementation of the scheme.

Local Finance Considerations

None relevant to this application

Conclusions and Reasons for approval

The temporary permission for a public television screen would partially screen a large blank elevation of a functional building, would add to the vitality of the area and would not negatively impact on the amenity of residential properties by virtue of the setting and distances involved. In order to protect the amenity of prospective occupiers of future development and so as not to prejudice regeneration of the area a temporary permission only is recommended. As such the development is considered acceptable and in accordance with aforementioned development plan policies.

The application would normally be determined under delegated powers but is being referred to Committee at the request of the Development Manager due to the prominence of the site and its visual importance in the street scene.

Background Papers

The relevant background papers relating to the individual applications comprise: the applications and all supporting documentation submitted therewith; and items identified in any Relevant History and Representations section within the report.

Any information referred to is available for inspection in the Planning Offices of Medway Council at Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham ME4 4TR and here <http://planning.medway.gov.uk/dconline/AcolNetCGI.gov>