

Supplementary planning guidance 3

Advertisement Control policy guidelines

Adopted November 1996 - amended April 2020*

*Updated to reflect the adopted Local Plan Core Strategy and to make document accessible



Delivering a Gravesham to be proud of

Introduction

Advertisements are an important part of the local scene. Well-designed advertisements can add brightness and bustle to commercial areas. However, cluttered, poorly designed, overlarge or brightly lit advertisements can have an adverse effect on the environment.

Although many signs can be displayed without express consent, the Borough Council has powers to control the most prominent outdoor advertisements under the Town & Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007. Additional powers to control advertisements exist in parts of Meopham, Luddesdown and Cobham, which have been designated as an area of special control, under the above regulations, in order to protect their attractive landscapes. **The council's advertisement control powers are only exercisable in the interests of amenity and, where applicable, public safety. It is these considerations, rather than commercial need or advantage, which must be decisive in the determination of any advertisement application.**

The aim of these policy guidelines is to seek a balance between commercial requirements and the need to maintain and improve the quality of the environment. Whilst each application for express consent under the regulations will be considered on its individual merits, these policy guidelines will be used as an important reference point.

The policy guidelines are in two parts. Area policies give guidance on the levels of advertisement display, which will be acceptable in various parts of the borough. General policies provide advice on advertisement displays throughout Gravesham. Where an advertisement is acceptable in terms of the area policies, the general policies will be applied to ensure that details of advertisement size, positioning and illumination are satisfactory.

Area policies

Gravesham has been divided into the following areas for the operation of these policy guidelines:

Gravesend town centre shopping area

Local shopping centres

[Residential areas within the urban areas and rural settlements inset from the greenbelt](#)

Other parts of the urban area of Gravesend and Northfleet

Conservation areas

The countryside

These advertisement control policy areas are generally identical with policy areas already identified in the Gravesham Local Plan First Review.

Gravesend town centre shopping area

(Area subject to Policy CS08 of the Local Plan Core Strategy)

It is recognised that advertisement displays can add to the appearance of Gravesend as a lively and prosperous shopping centre. Accordingly, the level of advertisement display acceptable in the town centre shopping area will be higher than elsewhere in the borough. Some parts of the town centre have been designated as conservation areas. Within those areas, in addition to Policy 1, advertisements must conform to Policy 5.

Policy 1 - Advertisements, including illuminated advertisements, will generally be acceptable on business premises in the town centre shopping area. However, the Borough Council will wish to see that displays are well designed and attractive.

Local shopping centres

(Areas subject to Policies S6 and S7 on the proposals map, Gravesham Local Plan First Review).

Advertisement displays can help to strengthen the identity of the borough's local shopping centres. However, many local shops directly adjoin or face residential property and commercial requirements have to be balanced against amenity.

Policy 2 - Advertisements in local shopping centres should generally relate to the premises on which they are displayed. Illuminated advertisements may be acceptable where they are adequately screened from residential property or are essential for the operation of a business, open after normal shopping hours.

It is likely that premises such as public houses and take-away food shops will fall within the category of businesses or activities open after normal hours.

Residential areas within the urban areas and rural settlements inset from the greenbelt.

(Areas subject to Policy CS02 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy)

The council's overriding concern will be to protect the amenity of residential areas and villages. However, the need for a limited amount of advertisement displays to identify business premises is recognised.

Policy 3 - Illuminated advertisements in residential areas and villages will be resisted, except in special circumstances where a functional advertisement is essential for the operation of the business or activity carried on after normal shopping hours. The display of other advertisement matter will be restricted to that

essential for the identification of business premises.

It is likely that public houses and guesthouses will fall within the category of businesses or activities carried on after normal shopping hours.

Other parts of the urban area of Gravesend and Northfleet

This is an area of varied land uses, including the borough's main industrial areas, open spaces and schools, together with mixed-use areas of shops, offices and houses around the edge of Gravesend town centre. Commercial requirements have to be balanced against the need to protect the amenity of residents and open spaces.

Policy 4 - Advertisement displays in other parts of the urban area of Gravesend and Northfleet will generally be acceptable on business premises, if they relate to the trade or activity carried on in the premises. Other advertisements will be considered on their individual merits and may be acceptable if they are viewed against a commercial background and, in the case of illuminated advertisements, are adequately screened from residential property.

Conservation areas

(Areas subject to Policy TC3 on the proposals map, Gravesham Local Plan First Review [and CS19 and CS20 in the Local Plan Core Strategy](#))

The Borough Council is very concerned to ensure that the environment generally is improved by achieving a good standard of design in new development. This is particularly relevant in conservation areas. Advertisements of modern design often sit uneasily within such historic areas. The Borough Council accepts that advertisements are a necessary part of ensuring the continuing vitality of such areas but at the same time, expects the standard of such advertisements to be high quality and in harmony with the area in which they are displayed.

Policy 5 - In or adjoining conservation areas and on listed buildings, or in a position which would affect the setting of a listed building, the protection of amenity will be the paramount consideration. Advertisements should harmonise with the architectural features of any building on which they are displayed and not otherwise detract from the appearance of the conservation area or listed building

The countryside

(All areas outside the urban area and the rural settlements inset from the greenbelt subject to policies CS02)

Advertisements in the countryside are often harmful to amenity and can be detrimental to public safety if badly sited in relation to narrow country roads. Accordingly, the amount of advertisement matter in the countryside will be strictly controlled.

A large part of Gravesham is designated an “Area of Special Control for Advertisements”. Within this area, a stricter control over advertisements applies because of the necessity of preserving or enhancing the appearance of the area.

Policy 6 - In the countryside, advertisements will be resisted unless a strong case can be made for their display.

General policies

Amenity

The Borough Council is keen to ensure that advertisement displays do not detract from and, if possible, add to the quality of the environment; this applies especially in sensitive locations such as conservation areas and on listed buildings.

Policy 7 - Advertisement displays will be expected to comply with the following criteria – they should be sympathetic to the appearance of the building or land on which they are displayed and should not be an over-intrusive feature in the street-scene or locality; they should not cause or add to an impression of clutter on a building or other land.

Public safety

Advertisement displays should not be detrimental to public safety, particularly on the highway.

Policy 8 - Advertisements should not obstruct visibility, interfere with the interpretation of road signs or traffic signals, or distract the attention of drivers.

Design principles

Wherever feasible, applicants should observe the following basic design points:

1. - Advertisement proportions -Depth should not exceed a quarter of the shopfront height to underside fascia.
2. - Type back-lit letters or “halo” lit, or good-quality external illumination.
3. - Materials – These should not clash with adjacent shopfronts or be garish. Large areas of acrylic or other shiny materials should be avoided. The use of matt finish or timber painted fascias will be preferred, as will dark fascias with white or light-coloured lettering
4. - Illumination -Any illumination used should conform with the luminance recommendations of the Institution of Lighting Engineers’ Technical Report
5. - Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements, in respect of internally illuminated advertisements which are visible from the highway.

Shopfront design guidance notes

Please refer to the following notes for details on specific elements of shopfront design.

1. - Introduction to the general principles of shopfront design, access to upper floors and the need for consent
2. - Elements of a traditional shopfront, historical shopfront design and the shopfront Window
3. - Design Details; door & access, stallriser, pilasters and fascia
4. - Materials; timber specification and finish
5. - Signs and advertisement; fascia, projecting signs, lettering and lighting
6. - Canopies, Blinds and Security

Advice and Further Information:

This document is for guidance only. The Borough Council is keen to encourage better design of advertisements displays in Gravesham:

For general enquiries on Planning Consent please visit our website [Do i need planning?](https://www.gravesham.gov.uk/home/planning-and-building/do-i-need-planning-permission/overview)
at <https://www.gravesham.gov.uk/home/planning-and-building/do-i-need-planning-permission/overview>

If you are unsure about the need for planning permission you are advised to consult the Council's Development Management team before undertaking any works to the property by emailing planning.admin@gravesham.gov.uk