

Supporting Planning Statement

Our ref No: 250618A rev2

Date of statement: March 2026

Site location: Castle Bingo, Briton Ferry Road, Neath, SA11 1AS

Proposal: Replacement of the existing static neon illuminated signage, with a static LED illuminated panel

Appellant: Castle Leisure Ltd



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Introduction

1. This Supporting Statement is submitted on behalf of Castle Leisure Ltd in support of an application for Advertisement Consent at Castle Bingo, Briton Ferry Road, Neath, SA11 1AS (the 'Site').
2. This application seeks consent to replace the existing neon static illuminated signage on the south western elevation of the premises with a static LED illuminated panel.
3. This Statement presents the context and rationale for the application as required by the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992. Additionally, it also provides justification of the proposal in context with the relevant policy context even if advertisement consent decisions are formally limited to considerations of amenity and public safety.
4. This Statement should be read in conjunction with all supporting documents and correspondence submitted in support of this application.

The Site Context and Proposal

Application Site

5. The site comprises Castle Bingo, a large, purpose-built leisure facility located to the north of the junction between A474 / Britton Ferry Road and School Road. The current signage consists of illuminated individual letters mounted high on the south western elevation of the building.



Figure 1: A satellite image showing the site (centre) within its immediate surroundings.

6. The immediate context is mixed. To the north of Britton Ferry Road there is a mix of character comprising commercial, leisure and retail uses, including a Lidl supermarket, health and fitness centre, petrol station incl. a convenience store. To the south of Britton Ferry Road, the area is described mostly as residential, including terraced properties, and blocks of flats as well as a junior school.

Proposal

7. The description of the proposed advertisement is as follows:

“Replacement of the existing static neon illuminated signage, with a static LED illuminated panel”

8. The Proposal seeks consent to replace the existing static neon lettering with a static LED illuminated panel measuring approximately 16.6m wide by 1.9m high.
9. The new LED panel will display promotional content and event notices relating specifically to the operation of Castle Bingo and will:
- Display a single static message (no animation, scrolling, or video);
 - Have an illuminance level of 4000-8000 nits (cd/sqm) during daylight hours, and 500-800 nits (cd/sqm) during dark hours,
 - Operate from 7am through to licensed closing time; and
 - Be located in the same position and elevation as the current signage.
10. The display will not project beyond the existing facade and its dimensions will match the proportions of the building elevation.

Planning History

11. A review of the Council’s online planning portal identified the following planning history related to the site:
- P2002/1395: Advertisement application for:- 2 flag type advertisements on 8m poles plus signage on buildings – Approved;
 - P2007/0073: Erection of two canopies – Approved;

Planning Policy Considerations

12. This section outlines the planning policy framework applicable to the Proposal, including relevant national and local planning policy guidance.

National

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12)

13. Planning Policy Wales (PPW) is the principal national planning policy document that sets out the land use policies of the Welsh Government, against which development proposals must be assessed. The latest edition, the twelfth, was published in February 2024.
14. The main thrust of the PPW is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of Wales. Placemaking lies at the heart of PPW, with policy and development management decisions required to deliver development that adheres to these principles. PPW supports economic growth, regeneration, and appropriate development.

Future Wales – The National Plan 2040 (2021) (Edition 1)

15. In February 2021, the Welsh Government adopted its first national spatial development plan, Future Wales The National Plan. The document provides the overarching strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining and developing a vibrant economy while ensuring climate resilience, among other things.

Technical Advice Note 7: Outdoor Advertisement Control

16. Technical Advice Note (TAN) 7– Outdoor Advertisement Control (2016) is relevant to the assessment of the Proposal as it offers detailed guidance on design, amenity and safety considerations for outdoor advertisements.

Local Planning Policy

17. The PPW confirms that planning applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan (2016) (LDP)

18. The statutory development plan for this site is Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan (LDP), adopted in January 2016. The LDP is used to guide and manage development providing a basis by which planning applications will be determined. The following policies are considered of relevance in assessing the Proposal and are

discussed in more detail within the next sections of this document. The most relevant policies in this case are the following:

- Policy SP20: 'Transport Network'
- Policy TR2: 'Design and Access of New Development'
- Policy BE1: 'Design'

Planning Assessment

Impact on Highway Safety

19. In the context of advertisement control, the key consideration is whether the Proposal would prejudice public safety, particularly in relation to highway users.
20. At the local level, Policy SP20(6) of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan (LDP) seeks to restrict development which would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety. Similarly, Policy TR2(1) requires that development proposals do not compromise the safe, effective and efficient use of the highway network, nor result in adverse impacts on highway safety.
21. At the national level, Technical Advice Note (TAN) 7 – Outdoor Advertisement Control provides clear guidance that advertisements should be assessed primarily in terms of their impact on amenity and public safety. TAN 7 confirms that advertisements should not be refused simply because they are illuminated or visible from the highway; rather, the determining factor is whether they would cause unacceptable distraction or confusion to road users.
22. The Proposal comprises the replacement of an existing illuminated signage with a static LED panel, positioned on the same elevation and in the same general location as the current signage. Importantly, the proposed display has been specifically designed to minimise any potential impact on highway safety. In particular:
 - The display will present static content only, with no animation, scrolling text, video or moving images;
 - Content will be updated infrequently;
 - The luminance levels will be controlled, with reduced brightness during hours of darkness, ensuring that the display remains appropriate to its surroundings and does not result in glare;
 - The signage will remain flush with the building façade, with no projection, ensuring no physical interference with visibility or movement;
 - The signage replaces an existing illuminated display, meaning that the principle of illuminated signage at this location is already established.

23. The site is located within an area characterised by existing commercial uses, street lighting, and signage. In this context, the proposed LED panel would not appear incongruous or introduce a new form of visual stimulus beyond what is already experienced by road users.
24. Furthermore, the nature of the proposal, being a single, static display, ensures that it does not create the type of distraction typically associated with digital advertisements that incorporate movement or rapidly changing imagery, which are often the primary concern in highway safety assessments.
25. Having regard to the siting, scale and design of the proposed signage, it is considered that the Proposal would not lead to driver distraction to a degree that would compromise highway safety. The development would therefore comply with the requirements of Policy SP20(6) and Policy TR2(1) of the LDP, as well as the guidance set out within TAN 7.

Visual Amenity and Design

26. The design of the proposed LED panel is visually appropriate and consistent with the established commercial character of the host building and its surroundings. The panel, measuring approximately 16.6m in width and 1.9m in height, will be positioned at a high level on the building's elevation, directly replacing the existing static neon lettering. The proposal will remain flush with the building façade, with no projection beyond the existing plane, thereby maintaining the building's established form and elevation treatment.
27. In accordance with Policy BE1 (Design) of the Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan, the Proposal has been carefully designed to complement and enhance the character and appearance of the site.
28. The surrounding area is characterised by a mix of commercial, leisure and retail uses, alongside significant highway infrastructure and existing lighting. In this context, the proposed LED panel would not appear incongruous or visually dominant. Instead, it would integrate appropriately within the wider townscape and represent a visual improvement over the existing neon signage through a more modern, uniform and legible display.
29. The Proposal has also been designed to ensure that it would not give rise to any significant adverse impacts on visual amenity. The controlled luminance levels, static nature of the display, and positioning on the building ensure that the signage remains proportionate and appropriate to its setting. As such, the development accords with criterion 4 of Policy BE1, in that it would not adversely affect the amenity of adjacent occupiers or the wider area.

30. Overall, the Proposal represents a high-quality and well-considered design that responds appropriately to its context, enhances the visual appearance of the building, and accords with the relevant design principles set out in Policy BE1 of the Local Development Plan.

Economic and Commercial Benefits

31. The national planning guidance recognises that development which supports the vitality and viability of existing businesses represents a positive material consideration.
32. The proposed LED signage will directly contribute to the ongoing commercial operations of Castle Bingo, which is a well-established leisure and entertainment venue. The display will be used to promote upcoming events, membership offers and entertainment opportunities, thereby increasing customer awareness, enhancing engagement and supporting footfall to the premises.
33. Castle Bingo performs an important role within the local economy both as a leisure destination and as a local employer. Its continued success supports a range of direct and indirect employment opportunities, including roles in hospitality, customer service, maintenance and associated services. In this context, the ability to advertise and promote its offer in an effective and modern format is an important component of maintaining commercial viability.
34. The Proposal is modest in nature, involving the replacement of an existing illuminated signage, but it will significantly improve the clarity, flexibility and effectiveness of on-site advertising. This is particularly important within a competitive leisure market, where clear and timely promotion of events and offers is key to sustaining customer interest and repeat visits.
35. National planning policy and guidance support development that enables existing businesses to adapt, remain competitive and continue to contribute positively to the local economy. In this case, the proposed signage represents a proportionate enhancement that will assist in maintaining the long-term viability of the business.
36. Overall, the Proposal represents a positive and proportionate form of development that will support the continued economic vitality of the premises and contribute to the wider local economy through sustained employment, increased visitor activity and ongoing business operation.

Conclusion

37. The Proposal seeks Advertisement Consent for the replacement of an existing neon illuminated signage with a static LED panel at Castle Bingo, Briton Ferry Road, Neath.
38. In summary, the Proposal is considered to take full account of its context, responds appropriately to its surroundings, and represents an acceptable form of advertisement development for the following reasons:
 - The proposed LED display will replace a similarly sized illuminated signage;
 - The signage is proportionate to the scale of the host building, visually appropriate, and will not harm the character or amenity of the locality;
 - The Proposal will deliver clear economic and commercial benefits in line with national and local planning policy objectives;
 - There is relevant precedent for this type of signage being approved and operated safely in similar contexts.
39. The Proposal constitutes an acceptable form of development in planning terms and is considered to comply with national policy (Planning Policy Wales and TAN 7), Future Wales – the National Plan 2040, and the objectives of the adopted Neath Port Talbot Local Development Plan.
40. In light of the above, the applicant respectfully requests that the Council to grant Advertisement Consent for the revised Proposal.