



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Inspector's Report PL-501209-WD-26

Development	Replacement of 2 No. advertising displays with 1 No. digital advertising display on the southwestern face of the existing structure.
Location	The Western side of the Cork Road and Inner Ring Road Roundabout , Kingsmeadow , Waterford.
Planning Authority	Waterford City and County Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	2660060
Applicant(s)	JCDecaux Ireland Ltd.
Type of Application	Permission
Planning Authority Decision	Refuse Permission
Type of Appeal	First Party Normal Planning Appeal
Appellant(s)	JCDecaux Ireland Ltd.
Observer(s)	None
Date of Site Inspection	25 th July 2026

Inspector

Kenneth Moloney

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1.0 Site Location and Description

- 1.1. The site is an existing V shaped static advertising display on the western side of the Cork Road, close to the Kingsmeadow Roundabout at the junction of the Cork Road and Inner Ring Road at Kingsmeadow, Waterford City.

2.0 Proposed Development

- 2.1. The proposed development will consist of the replacement of two existing advertising displays, currently located on two sides of a freestanding roadside advertising board to the western side of the Cork Road and Inner Ring Road Roundabout.
- 2.2. The two existing displays will be replaced with a single digital advertising display on the display's south-western face.
- 2.3. The existing advertising displays are 6.28m x 3.5m and 6.4m x 3.4m. The proposed digital display is 6.28m x 3.4m and the display will be mounted c.2.5m above ground level.
- 2.4. The existing structure will increase in height from 4.93m to 5.8m and the proposal includes the provision of a 1m fence on top of existing boundary wall which has an overall height of approx. 2.1m.
- 2.5. The north-eastern facing advertising display will be removed and screened by planting and will be no longer visible from the Kingsmeadow Roundabout.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

- 3.1. The Planning Authority decided to **refuse** permission for the following reason.
 1. Having regard to the Waterford City & County Development Plan 2022-2028, including in particular policy objectives DM 20 and DM 21 relating to advertisement signage, the location of the application site at the Cork Road, and in close proximity to the Kingsmeadow Roundabout, it is considered that the proposed development, by reason of its size and location, would represent a distraction to road users approaching a significant transport junction. Furthermore, it is considered that the development would negatively impact

on the amenities of the area, which is a main approach route to Waterford City Centre. The proposed development would, therefore, materially contravene development plan objectives DM 20 and DM21, would endanger public safety by reason of traffic hazard, and would seriously detract from the amenities of the area and as such would be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

3.2.1. The Planning Officer's report dated 25th March 2025, notes the following.

- The site is zoned 'General Business'.
- Planning permission for two digital advertising displays (each 6280mm x 3400mm) was refused by the Planning Authority and An Coimisiún Pleanála under planning reference 23/89.
- An Coimisiún Pleanála (ABP.317175-23) refusal reason concluded that the proposal would contravene CDP DM 20 and DM 21.
- The current proposal has removed one of the previously proposed digital signs (the one facing onto Kingsmeadow Roundabout).
- The proposed sign is the same size to that previously proposed.
- Road's Section are not favourable to the proposal and consider that the sign would add visual distraction to vehicle users and would not be in line with Road Safety Policies and the CDP.
- Relevant policy provisions include CDP DM 20 and DM 21.
- Advertising need has not been demonstrated in accordance with DM 21.
- The existing signage on the site may not have the benefit of planning permission.

3.2.2. Other Technical Reports

- Road's Section: - Objection to the proposed development on the basis that the signage is too close to the roundabout and adding visual distraction to vehicle uses and contrary to Road Safety Policies and the CDP.

3.3. Prescribed Bodies

- TII – Proposal shall have regard to DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities and relevant TII Publications and proposals impacting the existing light rail network, to TII’s “Code of engineering practice for works on, near, or adjacent the Luas light rail system.

3.4. Third Party Observations

- None

4.0 Planning History

- **ABP-317175-23 (L.A. Ref. 23/89)**

4.1. The Board **REFUSED** permission on the 1st of March 2024 for the replacement of existing static advertising displays with two digital advertising displays.

4.2. The reason for refusal is as follows.

1. Having regard to the Waterford City and County Development Plan, 2022 – 2028, including in particular policy objectives DM 20 and DM 21 relating to advertising signage, the proposed development and submissions in that regard, and the location of the application site at the Cork Road, and in close proximity to the Kingsmeadow Roundabout, it is considered that the proposed development, by reason of its size and location, would represent a distraction to road users approaching a significant transport junction. Furthermore, it is considered that, due to the increased height of the structure and the inclusion of digital display, the proposed development would negatively impact on the amenities of the area, which is a main approach route to Waterford City Centre. The proposed development would contravene development plan objectives DM 20 and DM21 of the development plan, would endanger public safety by reason of traffic hazard, would seriously detract from, the amenities of the area, and would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1 Waterford City and County Development Plan, 2022 – 2028

- 5.1.1. The appeal site is zoned 'General Business' and the objective for lands zoned General Business is as follows:

To provide for and improve General Business uses; this includes suburban district retail and local neighbourhood centres.

- 5.1.2. Volume 2 of the CDP includes Development Management Standards and includes a number of relevant objectives relating to advertising signage and hoardings.

- Development Management DM 20, which relates to 'Advertising', states the following.
 - The size and scale of signs should not conflict with existing structures in the vicinity;
 - The size, form, scale, illumination, appearance and its proximity to existing advertising signage avoids the creation of visual clutter and a reduction to the character of the area;
 - Large scale commercial advertisement structures are not acceptable on or near buildings of architectural or historical importance, in parks/ open public space, Architectural Conservation Areas and in areas of high amenity, and in residential areas;
 - Signs will not be permitted if they compete with road signs or otherwise endanger traffic safety;
 - Free standing signs will generally be resisted;
 - Signs should not interfere with windows or other façade features or project above the skyline;
 - Signs attached to buildings are preferable to those on freestanding hoardings;
 - Signs should not exceed 5.4 sq. m.

- Digital advertising may be permitted, in certain locations subject to design, size, detail, and level of illumination and the above criteria;
- As with shopfront design, Waterford City & County Council will require commercial interests, especially chain outlets, to restrain the use of their corporate image advertising where these are considered to be too dominant; and,
- Bus and taxi shelters incorporating advertising panels shall be carefully sited and shall not impact on vehicular sightlines or the safe movement of all street/road users.

5.1.3. The CDP states the following, which is relevant,

‘Specifically in relation to Waterford City, it is intended to preserve the frontage to the River Suir on the south bank from Scotch Quay to Bilberry and on the north bank from Sallypark to Dock Road, free from all advertising hoardings. The N25 By-Pass, the Outer Ring Road, the Inner Relief Road, Tramore Road, Browns Road, Cork Road, Dunmore Road and the Killure/Airport Road will also be kept free of advertising structures’.

- Development Management DM 21, which relates to ‘Advertising’, states the following.
 1. Signs will only be considered where an advertising “need” can be demonstrated. In this context the term “need” relates to the requirements of the travelling public and not the desire of the applicant to advertise as widely as possible. Each such need will be assessed on its merits. In relation to public institutions, Waterford City & County Council will determine the necessity for directional signs;
 2. Fingerpost signage is the preferred type of advertisement structure. Other types of advertisement structures will be discouraged unless a “need” can be demonstrated;
 3. Applications for advertisement structures will be refused where they give rise to a potential traffic hazard. In general,

advertisement structures will not be permitted at roundabouts, at traffic signalised junctions, at locations where they obstruct sight lines, compete with other traffic signs, give rise to confusion for road users or endanger traffic safety;

4. Applications for advertisement structures along national routes and along approach roads to towns and villages will generally not be permitted except for tourist attractions of national or regional importance. All such signage will require the written consent of the National Roads Authority, where appropriate;
5. The number of advertisement structures for any one premises shall be kept to a minimum and will generally be restricted to a maximum of two in the local area. In exceptional cases this maximum may be exceeded at the discretion of Waterford City & County Council;
6. The number of advertisement structures that will be permitted on any one pole will be strictly limited by Waterford City & County Council. In the event of multiple applications for advertisement structures at any particular location, priority will be given to approved applicants on a first come first served basis;
7. Applications for advertisement structures shall comply with the requirements of the “Traffic Signs Manual” published by Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government and the “Policy on the Provision of Tourist and Leisure Signage on National Roads” published by the National Roads Authority in 2011 (or any such other relevant standards and legislation that may be enacted). All lettering, logos and symbols are subject to the approval of Waterford City & County Council. In general, the use of the standard brown background and white lettering will be preferred Furthermore the Planning Authority will have regard to the provisions set out in Section 3.8 ‘Signage’ of the ‘Spatial Planning & National Road Guidelines (2012)’ in relation to signage proposals affecting national roads in particular

the requirement to control the proliferation of non-road traffic signage on and adjacent to national roads; and,

8. The use of electronic variable messaging signs commonly known as “VMS signs”, shall be reserved strictly for use in roadwork activities, hazard information and or as part of an approved event traffic management plan. Advanced written consent of Waterford City & County Council will be required prior to installation and use of such signage.
- Development Management DM 22, which relates to ‘Advertising Hoarding’, states the following.
 - Outdoor advertising hoardings shall not be permitted where it would detract from the visual quality of the setting of protected structures;
 - In all other cases, regard to the visual impact of a proposed advertising hoarding and potential of traffic hazard arising from same will be imperative;
 - The scale of display panels must be related to the scale of the buildings and streets in which they are located;
 - Where illuminated hoardings are proposed, their effect on the streetscape during the hours of darkness and on the amenities of the area will be considered;
 - Display panels may form part of the visual screening around building sites or sites waiting re-development. In such cases, temporary permissions will be considered where appropriately sized panels form an integral part of an overall boundary treatment and do not comprise more than half of the total surface area of such treatment;
 - As a general rule, planning permissions for outdoor advertising will be limited to a maximum of three years in the first instance, to enable the position to be reviewed by Waterford City & County

Council in light of changing circumstances at the end of that period; and,

- The number and scale of hoardings in the vicinity of the site will be a material consideration.
- Development Management DM 23, which relates to ‘Illuminated Signs’, states the following.
 - The type of illuminated signs, internally or externally illuminated, individual letters/neon tubes, should be determined by consideration of the design of the building and its location.
 - The design of an illuminated sign should be sympathetic to the building on which it is to be displayed. It should not obscure architectural features such as cornices or window openings in the area. On new buildings they should be part of the integral design.
 - The daytime appearance when unlit will be considered;
 - Sky signs, i.e. signs which project in any part above the level of a building parapet or obtrude on the skyline, are regarded as objectionable in principle and will not be permitted;
 - Neon tubular strip lighting is generally not acceptable; and,
 - The number of illuminated signs in the area

5.2. Variation no. 1 of the Waterford City and County Development Plan, 2022 – 2028.

- 5.2.1. Variation no. 1 was made by Plenary Council on the 13th of November 2025. The Variation was proposed to provide for a zoning amendment, the Joint Retail Strategy for the Waterford City Metropolitan Area, Blue / Green Infrastructure Strategy, County Settlement Typology, Core Strategy Policy and Phasing, and Regeneration and Active Land Management. There are no direct amendments to the appeal site.

5.3. Natural Heritage Designations

- Lower River Suir SAC (Site Code 002137) – 2.1 km northeast

- Kilbarry Bog pNHA (Site Code 001700) – 0.6 km southeast

6.0 EIA Screening

- 6.1. The proposed development is not a class for the purposes of EIA as per the classes of development set out in Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended (or Part V of the 1994 Roads Regulations). No mandatory requirement for EIA therefore arises and there is also no requirement for a screening determination. Refer to Form 1 in Appendix 1 of report.

7.0 The Appeal

7.1. First Party Appeal

- 7.1.1. The grounds of the first-party appeal maybe summarised as follows:

Ground of Appeal No. 1

- The appeal site is located on a busy arterial road characterised by low-rise commercial, industrial, retail uses and a sports stadium, and expanses of surface car parking.
- The local environment is not visually sensitive.
- The proposed signage would not detract from amenities.
- The upgraded digital display will improve the presentation of the site and therefore will have a positive impact on the amenities of the area.
- In relation to DM 20, the proposal provides for a material reduction in scale.
- In relation to DM 21, evidence is provided by Traffic Consultants that advertising displays are not a traffic hazard.
- In relation to planning history the PA Planner's Report demonstrates that there has been an advertising structure on the site for 50 years, as such the principle for an advertising structure at this location has been established.

- The following planning precedents for proposed digital displays that would not have negative impacts on the residential amenities or more attractive urban settings would support the proposed development.
 - ACP-323509-25 (PA Ref. WEB1521/25) – Macken St. and Grand Canal Lower, Dublin 2.
 - PA Ref. WEB1644/25 – 1 Annesley Bridge Road, Dublin 3.
 - PA Ref. WEB 1439/25 – 397 North Circular Road, Dublin 7.
 - PA Ref. 2473/19 – 2 Wexford St., Dublin 2.
- The proposed digital use would be a visual improvement on the amenities of the area.

Ground of Appeal No. 2

- The Council did not prepare a Traffic Report and their analysis in relation to road safety is at a nominal level.
- The appeal submission includes a specialist report from Consulting Engineers. The specialist report notes the following.
 - Proposal results in the reduction of advertising structures rather than an intensification.
 - The proposed digital display will operate under strict conditions,
 - Static images, no animation, video, flashing or scrolling content
 - Minimum dwell time of 10 seconds per image
 - Automatic brightness reduction in response to ambient light conditions
 - Luminance levels controlled in accordance with best practice
 - Proposed curfew between 02:00 and 06:00.
 - The above measures ensure no high-frequency visual stimuli impacting on driver attention.
 - The development has no impact on the physical road network, junction geometry or traffic control infrastructure.

- The display is located within an existing advertising environment and removal of an existing advertising structure reduces cumulative visual exposure.
- Therefore, the proposal does not give rise to a material increase in accident risk and does not cause a traffic hazard.
- Proposal not contrary to DM 20 and DM 21 of the CDP.

Lighting and Glare

- Given strict luminance controls, the proposed display will operate within appropriate lighting parameters.
- No unacceptable light spill, glare or visual intrusion will occur and no adverse impacts on the road safety.
- No material increases in lighting impact compared to current condition.
- A reduction in overall lighting given the removal of the advertising structure.

Road Safety Note

- Given operational characteristics, including proposed display and static content, extended dwell times and controlled luminance there is no material incremental safety risk.
- No impact on physical or operational characteristics of the junction and no impact on driver sightlines, traffic signals or road geometry.
- No impact on driver decision-making environment.
- Receiving environment contains roadside signage.
- Removal of one advertising display reduces overall visual load.
- Consistency with DM 20 and DM 21.

Ground of Appeal No. 3

- Proposed digital display will not endanger public safety by reason of traffic hazard.

- Transport for London Guidance for Digital Roadside Advertising and Proposed Best Practice (2013) indicates the following.
 - No demonstrable evidence that advertisements cause traffic collisions.
 - Acknowledged that advertisements can contribute to driver distractions in cases where drivers are faced with increased cognitive demands, such as busy junctions, merges and diverges.
 - The siting of advertisements in busy traffic locations requires more careful consideration.
 - Assessment of whether roadside advertisement is acceptable depends on location and level of distraction.
 - Moving images or advertising with complex information is likely to add to the level of distraction.
 - It is possible to manage the impact of digital advertising by control of type, brightness, form of change and interval between advertisements.
 - With appropriate controls digital advertising can be acceptable.
- Other International research demonstrates that digital advertising signage falls within acceptable safety thresholds. This conclusion is based on the following international research.
 - Swedish National Road and Transport Research Institute
 - Driver Visual Behaviour in the Presence of Commercial Electronic Variable Message Signs Federal Highway Administration
 - The Impact of Billboards on Driver Visual Behaviour: A Systematic Literature Review (2015).
- The following planning precedent decisions demonstrate that digital displays do not give rise to any increase in traffic safety issues.
 - PA Ref. WEB1683/25 – 54 Donnybrook Road, Dublin 4
 - PA Ref. WEB1705/25 – 159 Lower Kimmage Road, Dublin 6

- ABP-315763(PA Ref. WEB1357/22)– 7 Geraldine Terrace, Dublin 6
- ABP Ref. 301260(PA 4639/17)– Railway Bridge over Amiens St., D. 1
- PA Ref. D20A/0045 – Northeast side of Loughlinstown Roundabout, Co, Dublin.
- PA Ref. WEB1439/25 – 397 North Circular Road, Dublin 7
- ABP Ref. 321021-24(D24A/0582/WEB)– Whelehans Wines Limited, Bray Road, Loughlinstown, Dublin.
- PA Ref. SD20A/0240 – Lands adjacent to the junction of New Nagor Road and Kileen Road, Dublin 12.

7.2. Planning Authority Response

- None

7.3. Observations

- None

8.0 Assessment

Having examined the application details and all other documentation on file, including all of the submissions received in relation to the appeal, the reports of the local authority, and having inspected the site, and having regard to the relevant local/regional/national policies and guidance, I consider that the substantive issues in this appeal to be considered are as follows.

- Principle of Development
- Impact on Amenities
- Traffic Hazard
- Planning Precedents

8.1. Principle of Development

- 8.1.1. The proposed development is located in an area zoned for 'General Business'. In accordance with the Zoning Matrix in Table 11.2 of the CDP advertising structures is permitted in principle within this zoning objective, therefore the principle of development is acceptable, subject to the detailed considerations below.

8.2. Impact on Amenities

- 8.2.1. The proposed development consists of the replacement of 2 no. existing static advertising boards and the replacement with a single digital advertising display facing towards the southwest from the subject site.
- 8.2.2. The dimensions of the existing advertising boards are similar in scale to that of the proposed digital advertising display. The existing advertising boards for replacement are 6.28m x 3.5m and 6.4m x 3.4m respectively, and the new digital advertising display will have a dimension of 6.28m x 3.4m. However, the proposed digital advertising display will be raised in height relative to the existing structure. The overall height of the proposed advertising structure is to increase from 4.93m to 5.8m.
- 8.2.3. I note from the appeal submission that the development includes measures to reduce the visual impact of the proposed digital display, which includes remotely changing the advertisement displays at intervals of 10 seconds. Proposals also include provision of static images with no animation, video, flashing or scrolling content for the digital display. Furthermore, the measures will include automatic brightness reduction in response to ambient light conditions, luminance levels controlled in accordance with best practice and there will be a proposed curfew between 02:00 and 06:00. I would acknowledge that these measures would reduce the visual impact of the proposed digital advertisement display on the amenities of the area.
- 8.2.4. In addition to the above measures, I would accept that the replacement of two static advertising displays with one digital display would reduce the overall impact of the advertising displays on the amenities of the area.

- 8.2.5. Further to the above measures I would note that the applicant intends an overall rationalisation of advertising hoarding in Waterford City, and this includes the removal of an advertising display in Manor Street. Notwithstanding the proposed rationalisation, Manor Street is located in the city centre and is removed from the appeal site, and its removal will have no implications for the amenities adjacent to the appeal site.
- 8.2.6. I would note from my site assessment that the immediate context of the appeal site is mixed in character, and includes some undeveloped sites, a discount store located to the southwest of the appeal site, and the Waterford Regional Sports Centre situated on the opposite side of the road (R608). In addition to the local context, I would also acknowledge that the subject site is not located close to a protected structure nor is the site located within or adjacent to an Architectural Conservation Area. In addition, the site is not located within a designated protected view or scenic route, in accordance with CDP designations.
- 8.2.7. Notwithstanding the local characteristics and CDP designations of the immediate site context, I note from a planning history search of the site that current signage on the appeal site may not have the benefit of planning permission, and this is also highlighted in the PA's Planners Report. Therefore, the applicant's argument that the proposal represents a reduction in overall signage, by replacing two advertising boards with a single digital advertising display, is less compelling, as the existing signage does not appear to have the benefit of planning permission.
- 8.2.8. I would consider that the development plan provisions are clear and it is an objective of Development Management DM 20 that the provision of signs should not exceed 5.4 sq. m. The signage proposed measures approximately 21.3 sq. metres. DM 20 advises that digital advertising may be permitted, in certain locations subject to design, size, detail, and level of illumination, however, the scale of the proposed signage would significantly exceed that recommended in DM 20 of the CDP. The proposed development, as noted above also involves an increased height by approximately 1 metre, which would further increase the scale of the proposed advertising display.
- 8.2.9. In addition to the specific design requirements of DM 20, I note that Section 5.9 of the CDP advises that the N25 By-Pass, the Outer Ring Road, the Inner Relief Road,

Tramore Road, Browns Road, Cork Road, Dunmore Road and the Killure/Airport Road will also be kept free of advertising structures. The development is located on the Cork Road (R680) and therefore its location would be contrary to this CDP provision. I would consider that the changing of the advertisement displays every 10 seconds, relative to the existing advertising board, would have an impact on the amenities of the area.

- 8.2.10. In conclusion and having regard to CDP Development Management DM 20 I would consider that the development will have a greater visual impact than the existing advertising hoardings, notwithstanding the submissions of the applicant.

8.3. Traffic Hazard

- 8.3.1. I have noted above that the proposed digital display, which is southwest facing and orientated away from the Kingsmeadow Roundabout, will be remotely changed at intervals of 10 seconds. The proposed digital display is also approximately 1 metre higher than the existing advertising hoarding.
- 8.3.2. I would acknowledge that the proposal provides a benefit to traffic safety by reducing the signage from two signs to one sign, by removing the north-east facing static advertising board.
- 8.3.3. I have also noted above in para. 8.2.3 that the proposal includes measures to reduce impacts of the digital display, and I acknowledge that the appeal submits that these measures will not introduce dynamic or high-frequency visual stimuli that would compete with drivers' attention, which is a relevant consideration in terms of traffic safety.
- 8.3.4. The report accompanying the appeal also submits that the development will not result in unacceptable light spill, glare, or visual intrusion and will not adversely affect visual amenity or road safety at the Cork Road / Inner Ring Road Roundabout and the proposal will not result in any material increase in lighting impact compared to the existing situation.
- 8.3.5. I also acknowledge the appellant's comment that the physical or operational characteristics of the junction remains the same and does not impact on driver sightlines or road geometry. The appeal submission also includes international

research publications that demonstrates that digital advertising signage falls within acceptable safety thresholds.

- 8.3.6. Notwithstanding the above arguments I note that Development Management DM 21 of the CDP recommends that general advertisement structures will not be permitted at roundabouts, at traffic signalised junctions, at locations where they obstruct sight lines, compete with other traffic signs, give rise to confusion for road users or endanger traffic safety. The site of the advertising hoarding is in close proximity to the Kingsmeadow Roundabout, with a setback distance of approximately 21 metres from the roundabout. I would further note that the Road Engineer's Report on the file objects to the development on the basis that the signage is too close to the roundabout and adding visual distraction to vehicle uses and would be contrary to Road Safety Policies and the CDP. The approach road (R680 - Cork Road), adjoining the appeal site, to the Kingsmeadow Roundabout is two lanes and there is a single lane in the opposite direction, and therefore the location of the signage adjacent to the roundabout, in my view, would be contrary to DM 21.
- 8.3.7. Further Development Management DM 21 advises that applications for advertisement structures along approach roads to towns and villages will generally not be permitted except for tourist attractions of national or regional importance, and all such signage will require the written consent of the National Roads Authority, where appropriate.
- 8.3.8. The proposed digital advertising display is located on the Cork Road, a regional road (R680) which is a main arterial route to the city centre, where there are high levels of passing traffic and would therefore be contrary to DM 21 and Section 5.9 of the CDP (referred to in para. 8.2.9 above) which recommends that the Cork Road shall be kept free of advertising signage.
- 8.3.9. I would therefore consider that the development will contravene the development plan objective DM 21 and will result in a traffic hazard, having regard to height, scale and digital advertising display nature of the structure.
- 8.3.10. Material Contravention
- 8.3.11. The Commission will note that the Planning Authority's refusal reason is based on the proposal being a material contravention of development plan objectives DM 20

and DM 21 of the Waterford City and County Development Plan, 2022 – 2028 (as varied). I have set out both policy objectives DM 20 and DM 21 above in para 5.1.

- 8.3.12. Policy Objective DM 20 and DM 21 of the development plan refers to guidance in respect of advertising structures, and is not, in my view, sufficiently specific so as to justify the use of the term “materially contravene” in terms of normal planning practice. The Commission should not, therefore, consider itself constrained by Section 37(2) of the Planning and Development Act. Therefore, in this instance, I would not consider that the proposed development would materially contravene the Waterford City and County Development Plan, 2022 – 2028 (as varied).

8.4. **Planning Precedents**

I note that the appellant has put forward a number of cases as precedents for the proposed development, there are also a number of precedents for refusal, and each case must be assessed on its merits, and I would also consider that each location would have differing characteristics, road safety issues and development plan objectives and standards, and therefore I would not consider that the examples submitted would act as precedents for the proposed development.

9.0 **AA Screening**

- 9.1. I have considered case PL-501209-WD-26 in light of the requirements S177U of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended.
- 9.2. The closest European Site, part of the Natura 2000 Network, is the Lower River Suir SAC (Site Code 002137) which is located approximately 2.1 km to the northeast of the subject site.
- 9.3. Having considered the nature, scale and location of the project, I am satisfied that it can be eliminated from further assessment because it could not have any effect on a European Site.
- 9.4. The reason for this conclusion is as follows:
- The scale and nature of the development.
 - The location of the site on developed serviced lands.

- The absence of any ecological pathway from the development site to the nearest European Site.

9.5. I conclude, on the basis of objective information, that the development would not have a likely significant effect on any European Site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

9.6. Likely significant effects are excluded and therefore Appropriate Assessment (under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000) is not required.

10.0 Water Framework Directive

10.1. An assessment of the proposed development has been undertaken with regard to the objectives set out in Article 4 of the EU Water Framework Directive.

10.2. Having considered the nature, scale, and location of the proposed development, it is concluded that the proposal will not result in any risk of deterioration in the status of any water body, including surface waters (rivers and lakes), groundwater, transitional waters, or coastal waters. This applies to both qualitative and quantitative status, and in respect of temporary and permanent effects.

10.3. In addition, the proposed development will not adversely affect the achievement of established environmental objectives, including the protection, maintenance, and improvement of water body status, as required under the Directive.

10.4. Accordingly, the proposed development is considered to be compliant with the requirements of Article 4.

11.0 Recommendation

11.1.1. I recommend that planning permission be refused for the reason set out below.

12.0 Reasons and Considerations

1. Having regard to the Waterford City and County Development Plan, 2022 – 2028, including in particular policy objectives DM 20 and DM 21 relating to advertising signage, the location of the application site at the Cork Road (R680), and in close proximity to the Kingsmeadow Roundabout, it is

considered that the proposed development, by reason of its size, location and nature of digital display, would represent a distraction to road users approaching a significant transport junction. Furthermore, it is considered that, due to the increased height of the structure and the inclusion of digital display, the proposed development would adversely impact on the amenities of the area, which is a main approach route to Waterford City Centre. The proposed development would contravene development plan objectives DM 20 and DM 21 of the development plan, would endanger public safety by reason of traffic hazard, would detract from, the amenities of the area, and would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

I confirm that this report represents my professional planning assessment, judgement and opinion on the matter assigned to me and that no person has influenced or sought to influence me, directly or indirectly, following my professional assessment and recommendation set out in my report in an improper or inappropriate way.

Kenneth Moloney
Senior Planning Inspector

28th July 2026

Appendix 1: Form 1 EIA Pre-Screening

Case Reference	PL-501209-WD-26
Proposed Development Summary	Replacement of 2 No. advertising displays with 1 No. digital advertising display on the southwestern face of the existing structure.
Development Address	The Western side of the Cork Road and Inner Ring Road Roundabout, Kingsmeadow, Waterford.
IN ALL CASES CHECK BOX / OR LEAVE BLANK	
1. Does the proposed development come within the definition of a 'Project' for the purposes of EIA?	☒ Yes, it is a 'Project'. Proceed to Q.2.
	☐ No, No further action required.
(For the purposes of the Directive, "Project" means: - The execution of construction works or of other installations or schemes, - Other interventions in the natural surroundings and landscape including those involving the extraction of mineral resources)	
2. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 1, Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended)?	
☐ Yes, it is a Class specified in Part 1. EIA is mandatory. No Screening required. EIAR to be requested. Discuss with ADP.	

☒ No, it is not a Class specified in Part 1. Proceed to Q3	
3. Is the proposed development of a CLASS specified in Part 2, Schedule 5, Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) OR a prescribed type of proposed road development under Article 8 of Roads Regulations 1994, AND does it meet/exceed the thresholds?	
☒ No, the development is not of a Class Specified in Part 2, Schedule 5 or a prescribed type of proposed road development under Article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994. No Screening required.	
☐ Yes, the proposed development is of a Class and meets/exceeds the threshold. EIA is Mandatory. No Screening Required	
☐ Yes, the proposed development is of a Class but is sub-threshold. Preliminary examination required. (Form 2) OR If Schedule 7A information submitted proceed to Q4. (Form 3 Required)	
4. Has Schedule 7A information been submitted AND is the development a Class of Development for the purposes of the EIA Directive (as identified in Q3)?	
Yes ☐	Screening Determination required (Complete Form 3)

No ☒	Pre-screening determination conclusion remains as above (Q1 to Q3)

Inspector: _____ Date: _____