



Outdoor Advertising Strategy

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1.0 Introduction

With advances in technology, increasing demand for customer communication, as well as enhanced service delivery, South Dublin County Council (SDCC) are seeking to respond to these challenges by developing an updated and modern policy position on outdoor advertising. SDCC will seek to provide, manage and guide outdoor advertising in SDCC's administrative area, with an overall aim of benefiting the County by establishing a new communication network to engage with SDCC's customers and to promote SDCC's services.

South Dublin is a unique County with a mixture of established suburban settlements, historical villages, emerging town centres and significant new development and regeneration areas. The urban centres in the County provide a diverse urban environment and a sense of place. To build on the existing and emerging physical assets and to generate an urban realm of the highest possible quality, the sense of place needs to be nurtured and enhanced through creative, intelligent and co-ordinated interventions. Significant, underutilised value exists in the public domain of the County which, if carefully harnessed, can provide the means to generate public realm improvements without compromise to the character of the individual urban centres. This opportunity can be facilitated through a managed programme of outdoor advertisement.

This document outlines the Council policy on advertising structures and the strategy that has been developed for commercial advertising in the public domain. This strategy forms the basis of a practical policy to be applied to all proposals for outdoor advertising and should be read in conjunction with the South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2016- 2022 and any superseding Development Plan. The strategy is based on an analysis of how sensitive different parts of the County are to advertisement structures and identifies constraints and opportunities for the location of these structures. It also sets out what types of structures are acceptable as outdoor advertising elements. While commercial viability is a key consideration, it has been balanced with the need to create a high quality public domain and to safeguard and enhance sensitive areas and sites. The strategy also provides for a co-ordinated bartering system, to rationalise the location and concentration of existing advertising structures.

Please note that this policy position predominantly relates to outdoor advertising. Proposals that relate to signs erected on the exterior of buildings, within windows, as stand alone structures or attached to public utilities that advertise goods or services associated with that premises are generally addressed and assessed under Section 11 of the Development Plan.

2.0 Outdoor Advertising Structures

This section includes an assessment as to those locations where outdoor advertising may or may not be acceptable in principle. It is the policy of the planning authority to strictly control all advertising signs in relation to their location, design, materials, function and operation. In order to manage an effective programme of outdoor advertising, SDCC has developed a policy based on geographical zones.

These zones cover all parts of the County, including areas of architectural sensitivity, residential/commercial areas and areas of high amenity. Based on these zones, a range of controls and policies have been developed for each zone ranging from the prohibition of outdoor advertising in the most sensitive areas to more general controls in less sensitive areas where certain types of advertising will be considered. Consideration will also be given to the need for sensitive treatment and an appropriate transition at the interface between zones. These zones have been organised into categories, which can be classified as follows:

Zone 1: This zone consists of the areas that are the most sensitive and primarily relates to Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA) which contain places, areas and groups of structures that exhibit unique, distinct character and qualities within the county. There is a strong presumption against large outdoor advertisements within these areas. Smaller advertisements may be considered, subject to sensitive design and siting and subject to compliance with development management standards as set out in Section 7.

Zone 2: This zone consists of urban centres and locations that comprise retail, amenity and commercial uses. Outdoor advertisements may be permitted here subject to special development management measures as set out in Section 7. Within this zone, there are also large-scale tracts of commercial land-use, which have a separate robust character and may have the potential to accommodate outdoor advertising. In parks, outdoor advertisements are open for consideration at appropriate locations, subject to sensitive siting in the context of their surrounding environment and contributing in a positive way to the enhancement of the park amenity or the establishment of a new communication network.

Zone 3: This zone consists of the main transport corridors into, out of and within the county including the primary road network and Luas lines. There is an opportunity for the managed provision of outdoor advertising along these corridors in the public domain. Subject to compliance with the Section 3, the development of outdoor advertising in this zone will be open for consideration.

Zone 4: This zone consists of existing and potential high amenity areas including the Grand Canal corridor, the Liffey Valley, the Dodder Valley, the Dublin Mountains and upland rural areas. There is a strong presumption against new outdoor advertising in this zone. Replacement, improvement or upgrade of existing signs in this zone will be subject to compliance with development management standards as set out in Section 7.

Zone 5: This zone consists of significant developing areas where advertising could form an integral part of newly created streetscapes. This zone relates to certain strategic developments, regeneration areas or new mixed use communities where advertising may form part of new streetscapes, having regard to the need to protect residential amenities. Subject to compliance with development management standards in Section 7, the development of outdoor advertising in this zone will be open for consideration.

Zone 6: This zone consists of predominantly residential areas where new outdoor advertisements would generally be visually inappropriate. There is a strong presumption against large outdoor advertisements within these areas. Replacement, improvement or upgrade of existing signs in this zone will be subject to compliance with development management standards as set out in Section 7.

Outdoor Advertising Strategy 2019 - Zones for Advertising Control

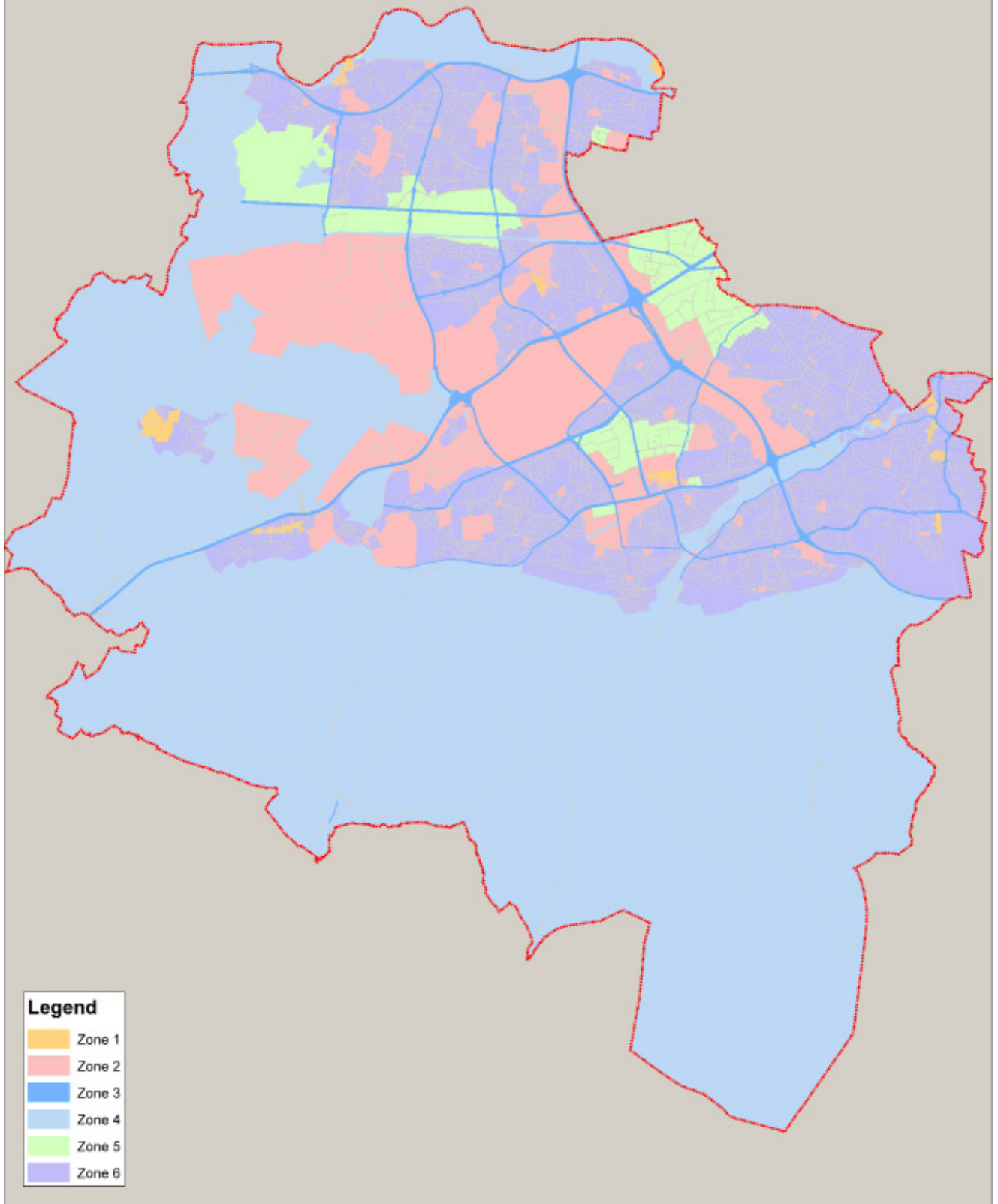


Figure 1 - Zones of Advertisement Control

Please note that the above graphic is indicative only and the written text supersedes the graphic. In relation to public roads and areas indicated as white, the zone of advertising control adjacent to these roads and areas is applicable.

3.0 Public Realm: A Co-ordinated Approach

The preferred location for outdoor advertising panels within South Dublin County is on the public realm contained within Zones 2, 3 and 5 as indicated in Figure 1 Zones of Advertisement Control. The provision of outdoor advertisements in the public realm will enable the Council to adopt a co-ordinated approach to the management of the advertising activity in the County and to encourage better quality signage in more appropriate locations.

One of the key aims of the strategy is to allow SDCC to create a clutter free, high quality public realm within the County. To achieve this, SDCC will encourage the upgrade, the removal or replacement of unsightly and outdated advertising structures. The Council will promote the phased removal of existing ninety-six and forty-eight sheet advertising panels as part of the overall enhancement of the public realm. In addition to the phased removal, ninety-six sheet and forty-eight sheet advertising panels will no longer be permitted and any new applications for advertising structures must relate to the scale of the buildings and streets in which they are to be located. Any new applications for outdoor advertising structures will be assessed on a case by case basis and should consider the removal of existing advertising panels, to rationalise the location and concentration of existing advertising structures.

It is recognised that there are instances throughout the County where existing structures do not conform with the zoning objective or advertising zone. Proposals that would intensify non-conforming uses, will be permitted only where they would accord with the principles of proper planning and sustainable development.

In order to achieve a coherent and standardised typology for outdoor display panels, SDCC has a preference for smaller types of advertising panels such as six-sheet size advertising panels and 8 sq.m advertising structures. The appropriate size will be determined with regard to the streetscape quality and character of the urban fabric and in accordance with the provisions of this outdoor advertising strategy.

The provision of all advertising in the County will be monitored and controlled in order to ensure that the value of open space and parks in terms of providing a connection to nature, wellbeing and amenity is maintained. The regional open spaces and parks are within the ownership of the Council. Controls will also be in place to prevent the creation of undesirable visual clutter and to protect environmentally sensitive areas and buildings. Any upgrading of existing outdoor advertising (e.g. trivision, scrolling, electronic) will only be permitted if it is acceptable in amenity/safety terms and an agreement to decommission at least one other display panel in the County and to extinguish the licence for that panel is fully considered. The purpose of the licence extinguishment is to ensure that other operators do not use the site.

In order to enhance, protect and secure architectural integrity and to prevent unwelcome litter pollution, there is a presumption against the granting of permission for advertising hoardings or signage on all Luas bridges and railway bridges unless the proposals provide for the removal and/or the rationalisation of existing display panels to significantly improve visual amenity.

In exceptional circumstances, applications for advertising display panels may be considered in zones where advertising structures would not normally be permissible. Temporary display panels may be approved where they can be used for the screening of building sites or land which are aesthetically unsightly. Notwithstanding the temporary nature of such signage, it will still be necessary to ensure the protection of special architectural quality and character. Under no such circumstances, however, will permanent permission be granted, and all such permissions will be of a temporary nature.

Advertising signs, separately, or more particularly in groups, can often cause injury to visual amenities, and can detract from the appearance of an area or a building; this is especially so when they are out of scale and character with their surroundings. They can also be a major distraction to road users and rail drivers and frequently result in traffic hazard. It is the policy of the planning authority to strictly control all advertising signs in relation to their location, design, materials, function and operation. Guidelines on these matters for light rail and national roads are available in the DoECLG Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities (March 2011) and TII's 'Code of engineering practice for works on, near, or adjacent the Luas light rail system'.

4.0 Illuminated Signs and Advertising

Illuminated signs and advertising in appropriate locations can provide both information and colour in urban areas after dark. Accordingly, the following guidelines will apply, in conjunction with the provisions of the general outdoor advertising strategy, the Development Plan and with regard to the zones of advertising control:

- The type of illuminated signs, internally or externally illuminated, individual letters, and neon tubes should be determined by consideration of the design of the building and its location, as well as the potential for low-energy options.
- The design of an illuminated sign should be sympathetic to the building on which it is to be displayed and 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 that 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.
- Internally illuminated scrolling signs, or signs with exposed neon tubing, are generally not acceptable.
- Illuminated signs with the use of electronic visual display technology such as LED (light emitting diode) and LCD (liquid crystal display) will be considered having regard to the Advertising Management Standards, as set out in Section 7 of this document.
- The number of illuminated signs in the vicinity of the site will be taken into consideration when assessing proposals

5.0 Advertising on Bus Shelters and Luas Stops

Large, internally illuminated advertising on bus shelters and at Luas stops can detract from the visual amenity of protected structures, conservation areas and residential amenity, and in these instances will not generally be permitted.

In considering applications for bus shelters and Luas stop proposals, the planning authority will have regard to the particular circumstances of each case, such as location, scale and type of advertising proposed, and the effect on the amenities of the area and the streetscape, as well as the provisions and zones of advertising controls as set out in the general outdoor advertising strategy.

6.0 Implementation of the Outdoor Advertising Strategy

The Planning Authority will take enforcement measures to secure the removal of unauthorised advertisements from private property and will remove unauthorised advertisements from public areas. Where appropriate, the council will use the powers available under Section 209 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (or as may be amended) to repair, tidy or remove advertisement structures or advertisements, or the provisions of the Litter Act.

South Dublin County Council will evaluate all planning applications for advertising in relation to the surroundings and features of the buildings on which they are to be displayed, to the number and size of signs (both existing and proposed) and the potential for the creation of undesirable visual clutter. Permissions for outdoor advertising in certain instances, where appropriate as determined by the planning authority, may be limited to a maximum of five years in the first instance to enable the position to be reviewed by South Dublin County Council in the light of changing circumstances at the end of that period.

Non-essential advertising structures, or any advertising structures which would impact injuriously on amenity, the built environment or road safety, and to secure the removal of unauthorised signs, will be restricted.

SDCC acknowledges the ever-changing technological advances in this sector, most notably with the emergence of digital advertising and will therefore consider new and innovative advertising format solutions, subject to compliance with development management standards.

7.0 Advertising Development Management Standards

Applications for new advertising structures on private lands (adjacent to primary routes) will be considered having regard to the following:

- The geographical zone in which the site is located, as set out in the figure showing zones of advertising control.
- The rationale for the proposed advertising structure, including proposals for the removal and/or rationalisation of existing outdoor advertising structures.
- The concentration of existing advertising structures in the area.
- The design of the advertising panel and the use of high-quality materials.
- The scale of the panel relative to the buildings, structures, roads and streets in which the advertising panel is to be located.
- Impact on the character of the street and the amenities of adjoining properties, in particular residential properties.
- Impact of the structure and any proposed lighting on biodiversity.
- Impact of the structure on Views and Prospects (see Section 9.2 of Development Plan).
- Advertising panels will not be permitted where they interfere with the safety of pedestrians, the accessibility of the public footpath or roadway, the safety and free flow of traffic or if they obscure road signs.
- Impact on the character and integrity of Architectural Conservation Areas and Protected Structures.
- Proposals must meet the safety requirements of Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), where appropriate including the policy and codes associated with signage, safety and operational requirements of Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), for both light rail and national roads where appropriate.