

DELEGATED REPORT

Application No:	P/26/0047
Site Address:	Unit E Dowlais Top Retail Park Dowlais Merthyr Tydfil CF48 2TA
Development:	Erection of 3 no. totem poles each to display Retail Park and traders' signage
Case Officer:	Gareth Davies
Site Visit:	15th April 2026
Application Expiry Date:	9th June 2026
Consultation reply date expired:	5th May 2026

APPLICATION SITE

The application relates to the Dowlais Top Retail Park and the land round about. The site encompasses the retail park with Dunelm, and B and M Bargains, the store currently being converted to Food Warehouse, and the associated car parking shared between these three units.

The property is accessed via an access road from the Heads of the Valleys Road to the south of the site, and forms part of a wider retail offer in this area which also includes Asda to the south and a Lidl outlet to the south east.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The application seeks advertisement consent for the erection of three totem signs on the approach to the three retail units. Sign 1 would be located on the grass verge immediately adjacent to the junction of the service road that provides access to the three retail units. Sign 2 would be to the north of the Dunelm store on the grass verge adjacent to the junction on the access road and sign 3 would be located to the south west of the Dunelm store on the grass verge adjacent to its service road.

The signage would be mounted on a 7m high solar energy column with the signage mounted in the mid-section with a double solar panel above. The signage would have dimensions of 2m high by 1.5m wide would read:

1. Dowlais Top retail Park
2. The food WAREHOUSE
3. Dunelm

4. B&M

The retail park sign will be black text on a white background, and the three others will be in the respective corporate style, fonts, and colours. All signs will be internally illuminated. On the reverse of the sign would be a non-illuminated panel with written text that states, 'Thank you for shopping at Dowlais Top Retail Park'.

Each solar panel would have dimensions of 1.7m x 1.1m and would be orientated to capture sunlight all year round.

PLANNING HISTORY

P/26/0037 – Illuminated sign to front of building – Approved 20.04.2026.

P/26/0006 – Lawful Development Certificate for the installation of roof mounted solar panels – Granted 04.02.2026.

P26/0002 – Canopy and Roller Shutter Door – Approved 10.02.2026.

P/26/0001 – New Shopfront – Approved 10.02.2026.

P/25/0343 – Installation of Plant, Plant Cage and Bin Store – Approved 10.02.2026.

P/25/0342 – Signage – Approved 10.02.2026.

P/25/0256 – Variation of condition 1 of planning permission P/95/0607 to enable the unit to be used for the sale of convenience goods, carpets and consumer durable goods , together with no more than 175 sq.m. gross floorspace of unrestricted ancillary comparison goods (Removal/Variation of Condition) – Granted 18th December 2025.

P/24/0262 – Signage (Unit A) – Approved – 02.01.2025

P/24/0215 – LDC for use class A1 (Unit A Dunelm) – Approved 01.11.2024.

P/96/0478 – advertisement hoarding – Approved 20.12.1996.

P/96/0261 – Shop signs and poster panels – Approved with Conditions 16th August 1996.

P/95/0607 – Single storey retail unit – Approved with Conditions 1st March 1996.

CONSULTATION

Highways & Engineering Manager – No objection

Environmental Health – No objection

South Wales Police – No comments

Welsh Government Highways – No response received.

PUBLICITY

In accordance with the Town & Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012, site notices were placed in and around the site on 15th April 2026.

No objections or representations were received as a result of this publicity exercise.

POLICY CONTEXT

National Development Framework

Future Wales: The National Plan 2040 (February 2021) sets out the strategy for addressing key national priorities through the planning system, including sustaining, and developing a vibrant economy, achieving decarbonisation and climate-resilience, developing strong ecosystems, and improving the health and well-being of our communities.

National Planning Policies

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12)

Technical Advice Note 7 Outdoor Advertisement Control (1996)

Section 6 – indicates that the display of outdoor advertisements can only be controlled in the interests of amenity and public safety.

Section 10 – notes that in assessing and advertisements impact on public safety, local planning authorities should have regard to its effect on the safe use and operation of any form of traffic or transport, including the likely behaviour of vehicle drivers who will see the advert and possible confusion with any other traffic signs or signals.

Local Planning Policies

There are no specific policies contained within the adopted Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council Replacement Local Development Plan 2016 – 2031 that relate directly to the issue of advertisement control. Consequently, this application needs to be assessed against the advice and requirements outlined in Technical Advice Note 7 as outlined above.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The key considerations in the assessment of this application for advertisement consent are whether the proposed advertisements are acceptable in terms of their impact on amenity and public safety.

The proposed signs are considered acceptable in terms of their impact on the amenity of the area. Though internally illuminated, this would not appear out of character given the nature of the area, indeed, consolidated corporate signage is commonplace on the immediate approaches of most retail parks. In addition to this, the agent has confirmed that most of the ad hoc signage currently on the approaches to the site will be removed with the exception of the Dunelm delivery signage. The proposals are considerably more modest than current proposals for totem signage at the nearby Lidl and McDonalds

facilities and importantly would not have any adverse impact on the amenity of any nearby dwellings.

With regard to the impact of the proposed signage on public safety, and particularly highway safety, there would be no adverse impacts. The signs would be read as part of a wider group of store-based advertising/identifiers and do not conflict with the immediate highway system or the wider road network including the nearby 465(T) Heads of the Valleys Road. The Councils Highways Department has not objected to the proposals and Welsh Government Highways Division have not responded to the consultation on the revised plans within the statutory period but did not raise objection to the initial submission.

CONCLUSIONS

For the above reasons, the proposed advertisements are considered acceptable and accords with planning policy in terms of the requirement to satisfy amenity and public safety considerations. As such, a positive recommendation is made below offering support for the application for advertisement consent.

The duty to improve the economic, social, environmental, and cultural well-being of Wales, in accordance with the sustainable development principle, under section 3 of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 ("the WBFG Act") has been taken into consideration when determining this application. In reaching the following recommendation, the ways of working set out at section 5 of the WBFG Act have been considered and thus the proposal is in accordance with the sustainable development principle through its contribution towards one or more of the Welsh Ministers well-being objectives set out as required by section 8 of the WBFG Act.

RECOMMENDATION: ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT BE GRANTED

RECOMMENDATION ENDORSED



Director of Neighbourhood Services

DATE: 15.05.2026