

# Street food sign at Omni Centre must be removed

A large neon pink sign erected in Edinburgh city centre to attract food market customers will have to be ripped out and taken away after operators lost a planning battle to keep it in place.

The illuminated letters were installed on Leith Street without planning permission to promote Edinburgh Street Food, which opened at the Omni Centre in February.

The council refused plans submitted retrospectively and said it was a potential trip hazard and “visually intrusive”.

An appeal to The Scottish Government has been rejected, with a planning reporter saying they shared the local authority’s concerns about it being “an obstacle in the public realm”.

It leaves owners of the Edinburgh Street Food with no other option than to remove the bright sign or face enforcement action.

An appeal statement on behalf of Edinburgh Street Food co-founder, Andrew Marshall, argued that the one-and-a-half metre tall lit-up ‘ESF’ was “an integral part of the branding of the street food market”.

He said: “It has been designed to announce the location to the main thoroughfare. The area is commercial in nature, where this type of signage is to be expected.”

It disputed that the sign was “an incongruous feature in the streetscape” and “visual clutter”.

It said: “Instead, the proposed signage provides a crucial presence for Edinburgh Street Food on the main thoroughfare past the Omni Centre.”

However planning reporter Christopher Warren was not in agreement – and said the lit-up pink display created “a rather cluttered appearance” and looked “quite haphazard”.

He also raised an issue with the sign covering tactile paving for visually impaired pedestrians.

“Given the importance of this tactile paving in assisting the visually impaired to pass safely through Greenside Place, I share the council’s concerns over the siting of the signage, which shows little regard for the function and positioning of the tactile paving,” he said in a decision notice issued on Tuesday.

Importantly he also said: “The council considers that the signage is an obstacle in the public realm, adversely affecting pedestrian safety and particularly the visually impaired. I have already noted above that the signage is positioned across tactile paving at the top of steps. Given the importance of this tactile paving in assisting the visually impaired to pass safely through Greenside Place, I share the council’s concerns over the siting of the signage, which shows little regard for the function and positioning of the tactile paving.”

by Donald Turvill Local Democracy Reporter

[The Omni Centre is now on the market for sale by owners Nuveen who own St James Quarter.](#)

