



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 21 January 2020 by C Brennan BAE (Hons) M.PLAN

Decision by Andrew Owen BA (Hons) MA MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 February 2020

Appeal Ref: APP/Q5300/Z/19/3238549

The Walker Cricket Ground, 175 Waterfall Road, Southgate N14 7JZ

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 against a refusal to grant express consent.
 - The appeal is made by the Walker Cricket Ground Trust against the decision of the Council of the London Borough of Enfield.
 - The application Ref 19/02183/ADV, dated 12 June 2019, was refused by notice dated 9 August 2019.
 - The advertisement proposed is replacement of existing signage with new signage of the same size and non-illuminated.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and express consent is granted for replacement of existing signage with new signage of the same size and non-illuminated as applied for. The consent is for five years from the date of this decision and is subject to the five standard conditions set out in the Regulations.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by an Appeal Planning Officer whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are:
 - i) the effect of the proposed advertisement on the visual amenity of the area which is within the Southgate Green Conservation Area.
 - ii) the effect of the proposed advertisement on public safety.

Reasons for the Recommendation

Visual Amenity

4. The appeal site is located on the northern side of Waterfall Road. It comprises the entrance to the Walker Cricket Ground and the two green signs which stand on either side of it. The facilities of the cricket ground are set back a considerable distance from the road and are well-screened from public views due to tree coverage along its southern boundary. A row of semi-detached properties lie on the opposite side of the road.
 5. The proposed replacement signs would be located in the same position as the existing signs. They would be identical in size to the existing signs, although they would be elevated 1200mm from the ground rather than 250mm as at
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present. As the existing signs blend in with the surrounding vegetation and are set at a low level, I can appreciate how the entrance to the cricket ground might not be obvious to visitors and delivery drivers, particularly at night. While the elevated positioning, predominantly white colouration and contemporary design and materiality of the proposed replacement signs would be relatively more visible, I do not consider that they would appear overtly garish or obtrusive. Instead, the proposed signage would serve to clearly indicate the entrance of the cricket ground and its facilities, while having a neutral effect on the visual amenity of the area.

6. I note that the Southgate Green Conservation Area Appraisal states that the existing signs to the cricket ground are excessive and damage the rural feel of the area. However, it is not uncommon to find signs of varying design and size in the rural countryside, and indeed many of the adverts shown in the photo in the Appraisal are no longer in that prominent position. In any case, given their modest size, neutral design and position set back from the road, I do not consider that the proposed advertisements would unduly detract from the rural character of the surrounding area.
7. I have a statutory duty under section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to consider whether the proposed advertisement would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Southgate Green Conservation Area. Conservation of designated heritage assets is also given special emphasis in the National Planning Policy Framework. Having identified that the proposed advertisements would not harm the visual amenity of the area, I find that they would thereby preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
8. Insofar as they relate to visual amenity, I have taken into account the National Planning Policy Framework (2019), which states that the quality of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly designed. I have also taken into account Policies 7.1, 7.4, 7.6 and 7.8 of the London Plan (2016), which broadly state that structures should be appropriate to their context and local character, contribute to people's sense of place and preserve the value of heritage assets. I have also taken into account Core Policies 30 and 31 of The Enfield Plan Core Strategy (2010-2025), which state that all interventions in the public realm must be of a high quality and preserve heritage assets. I have also taken into account Policies DMD 37 and DM D44 of the Development Management Document (2014), which broadly state that development must be appropriate to the character of the surrounding street scene and preserve surrounding heritage assets, and Policy DMD 41 which seeks the same with specific reference to advertisements. I have also taken the Southgate Green Conservation Area Character Appraisal (2015) into account, which details the secluded and rural nature of Waterfall Road. Given that I have concluded that the proposal is not harmful to visual amenity, the proposal complies with these policies.

Public Safety

9. The Council state that there is insufficient information to ascertain whether the proposed replacement signage would be sufficiently set back from the road. However, from the submitted plans, it is clear that the proposed replacement signs would be set back from the road by around 3m, which is well in excess of the 2.4m required by the Council's Transportation advice, with their exact

positioning highlighted in yellow on the plans and therefore sufficiently explicit. Due to their set back location from the road, they would not obstruct visibility for vehicles exiting the cricket ground. There is nothing before me which indicates that the proposed signs would impair the safety of any pedestrian or road user.

10. For the above reasons, I conclude that the proposed advertisements would not have a harmful effect on public safety. Insofar as they relate to public safety, I have taken into account Policy DMD 47 of the Development Management Document (2014) and Core Policy 24 of The Enfield Plan Core Strategy (2010-2025), which state that the Council will seek to improve highway safety. Given that I have concluded that the proposal would not cause harm in terms of public safety, the proposal complies with these policies.

Conditions

11. The five standard conditions as set out in the Regulations are imposed.

Conclusion and Recommendation

12. For the reasons given above and having had regard to all other matters raised, I recommend that the appeal should be allowed.

C Brennan

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

13. I have considered all the submitted evidence and the Appeal Planning Officer's report and on that basis the appeal is allowed.

Andrew Owen

INSPECTOR