



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 8 July 2025 by E Nutman BA (Hons)

Decision by John Morrison BA (Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 30th September 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/W4325/Z/25/3363054

17 Shrewsbury Road, Oxtun, Wirral CH43 1UU

- The appeal is made under Regulation 17 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended) against a refusal to grant express consent.
 - The appeal is made by RAFA Birkenhead Branch Club against the decision of Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is ADV/24/01350.
 - The advertisement proposed is described as '1 x Banner 3.500cm x 80cm Placed along Handrail on Balcony Situated above the main entrance 2.3m above ground. White, Red Letters and Black letters. Function Room. Available All Occasions. Snooker, Darts, Quizzes Karaoke, Bingo & Dancing Lessons.'
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Appeal Procedure

2. The site visit was undertaken by a representative of the Inspector whose recommendation is set out below and to which the Inspector has had regard before deciding the appeal.

Procedural Matter

3. The advertisement is already in place. Therefore, I have considered the proposal on the basis that consent is sought retrospectively.

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposal on visual amenity with specific regard to the Oxtun Village Conservation Area (CA) and a Non Designated Heritage Asset (NDHA).

Reasons for the Recommendation

5. The appeal site comprises a large detached brick building of the Victorian villa type, of which there are a significant number locally, as well as both detached and pairs of semi detached period dwellings set back from and facing the local roads. Number 17, in use as a social club, is largely shielded from the road by mature trees, but is more exposed on approach along Alton Road due to the car park at the rear. Itself sat behind a substantial but equally historic brick wall at the back edge of the footway.
6. The building has a number of period architectural features such as the contrasting quoins and banding, inset and surrounded portrait style windows and a number of

aesthetic chimneys. These aspects, and the building's scale, add to a strong presence and grandness, reflective of its prominent street position. Despite some replacement windows and an unfortunate modern entrance with a flat roof canopy, the building retains much of its historic and architectural character which, along with other similar examples from the same time period, contribute positively to its status as a NDHA, the visual qualities of the street scene and, by association, the significance of the CA.

7. The banner in question is currently affixed to the railings above the entrance canopy. The material and rudimentary manner in which the sign has been affixed thereto detracts from the visual qualities of the building, unacceptably jarring with the characteristic period detailing. An effect exacerbated by its size, elevation and use of multiple colours. Whilst it is to the rear and shielded from some public views, it would be noticeable from Alton Road as well as by users of the large car park. I have not been provided with further information or locations regarding the other cited examples of advertisements. My findings are therefore unchanged.
8. Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended, requires that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area. This applies to the advertisement regulations as far as it relates to amenity. For the reasons I have set out above, and specifically for the harm the proposal would cause to the qualities of the NDHA, the advertisement would neither preserve nor enhance the character or appearance of the CA. The judgement of whether such harm amounts to being less than substantial or otherwise does not apply. Nor am I required to balance it against the public benefits of the proposal.
9. The advertisement would cause unacceptable harm to amenity and thus fail an assessment against the above mentioned regulations. Only as far as they are material considerations relevant to the main issue, the advertisement would not sit squarely with the aims of Policies WS6, WS7 and WP3 of the Wirral Local Plan (2025). They have not been decisive.

Other Matters

10. There may be some benefits to the signage in terms of what it seeks to promote and the exposure that has for the operation of the premises. However, the advert regulations, and specifically the establishment of any heritage harm arising there out of, does not allow for a weighing exercise per se. In any case, I remain to be convinced that the reasons and/or benefits of the advert could not be achieved by alternative and potentially less harmful means.

Conclusion and Recommendation

11. For the reasons given above, the appeal scheme would fail an assessment under the regulations. I therefore recommend that the appeal should be dismissed.

E Nutman

APPEAL PLANNING OFFICER

Inspector's Decision

12. I have considered all the submitted evidence and my representative's report and on that basis the appeal is dismissed.

John Morrison

INSPECTOR