
APPLICATION DETAILS

Application No:	19/0559/ADV
Location:	Tees Valley Hospital Church Lane Acklam Middlesbrough TS5 7BH
Proposal:	Erection of a pole mounted sign board
Applicant:	Mr Martin Williams
Company Name:	Acklam Hall Estates Ltd
Agent:	Mr Martin Anderson
Company Name:	P+HS Architects
Ward:	Acklam
Recommendation:	Approve with Conditions

SUMMARY

Advertisement consent is sought for the erection of a non-illuminated sign board at the entrance to Tees Valley Hospital, which is located to the rear of Acklam Hall off Church Lane / St. Marys Walk. Concerns were raised to the scale of the initial sign in view of the sites position within the Acklam Conservation Area and its proximity to listed buildings. The sign has been reduced in scale and design from a V board, to a single totem style sign.

Objection has been received, mainly in relation to the scale of the proposed signage and its position relative to heritage assets.

It is considered that the revised scheme, although proposing a modern sign, is of a scale which does not unduly compromise or dominate the nearby listed buildings or conservation area and is well located relative to the entrance into the site, being in general compliance with relevant Local Plan Policies.

SITE AND SURROUNDINGS AND PROPOSED WORKS

Advertisement consent is sought for the erection of a sign at the entrance to the hospital. The details being proposed have been changed since the initial submission, from a V sign measuring 2.5m in height and having two 1.2m wide boards forming the V, to a single sign measuring 2.4m in height and 1.15m in width.

The site is located within the Acklam Conservation Area, to the rear of Acklam Hall, just off Church Lane / St Mary's Walk. The area is characterised by the properties on the western side of Church Lane, the nearby church and the relative openness between Church Lane and the hospital itself.

PLANNING HISTORY

Approval has previously been granted for the erection of the hospital and for the change of use of Acklam Hall as well as for the additional housing either side of Acklam Hall.

PLANNING POLICY

In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Local Planning Authorities must determine applications for planning permission in accordance with the Development Plan for the area, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Section 143 of the Localism Act requires the Local Planning Authority to take local finance considerations into account. Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) requires Local Planning Authorities, in dealing with an application for planning permission, to have regard to:

- The provisions of the Development Plan, so far as material to the application
- Any local finance considerations, so far as material to the application, and
- Any other material considerations.

Middlesbrough Local Plan

The following documents comprise the *Middlesbrough Local Plan*, which is the Development Plan for Middlesbrough:

- Housing Local Plan (2014)
- Core Strategy DPD (2008, policies which have not been superseded/deleted only)
- Regeneration DPD (2009, policies which have not been superseded/deleted only)
- Tees Valley Joint Minerals and Waste Core Strategy DPD (2011)
- Tees Valley Joint Minerals and Waste Policies & Sites DPD (2011)
- Middlesbrough Local Plan (1999, Saved Policies only) and
- Marton West Neighbourhood Plan (2016, applicable in Marton West Ward only).

National Planning Policy Framework

National planning guidance, which is a material planning consideration, is largely detailed within the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF). At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11). The NPPF defines the role of planning in achieving economically, socially and environmentally sustainable development although recognises that they are not criteria against which every application can or should be judged and highlights the need for local circumstances to be taken into account to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.

For decision making, the NPPF advises that local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way, working pro-actively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area and that at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development (paragraph 38). The NPPF gives further overarching guidance in relation to:

- The delivery of housing,

- Supporting economic growth,
- Ensuring the vitality of town centres,
- Promoting healthy and safe communities,
- Promoting sustainable transport,
- Supporting the expansion of electronic communications networks,
- Making effective use of land,
- Achieving well designed buildings and places,
- Protecting the essential characteristics of Green Belt land
- Dealing with climate change and flooding, and supporting the transition to a low carbon future,
- Conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment, and
- Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals.

The planning policies and key areas of guidance that are relevant to the consideration of the application are:

DC1 - General Development

CS5 - Design

The detailed policy context and guidance for each policy is viewable within the relevant Local Plan documents, which can be accessed at the following web address.
<https://www.middlesbrough.gov.uk/planning-and-housing/planning/planning-policy>

CONSULTATION AND PUBLICITY RESPONSES

MBC Conservation Officer

The location for the proposed pole-mounted sign is within the settings of Acklam Hall, which is Grade II Listed and St Mary's Church, which is on our Local List. The location is also within Acklam Hall Conservation Area. The size of the sign and lack of illumination means it should cause no harm to any of the aforementioned heritage assets. This proposal complies with policy CS5 (design) of the Core Strategy and with the historic environment paragraphs within the NPPF.

Public Responses

Number of original neighbour consultations	6
Total numbers of comments received	3
Total number of objections	3
Total number of support	0
Total number of representations	0

92 St Mary's Walk

Lives opposite and objects based on it being too big, not in keeping with the surroundings and suggests a smaller better located signage would be more appropriate.

100 St Marys Walk

I object to it receiving planning permission. This objection is on the grounds of design and appearance. The area around Acklam Hall and St. Mary's Church is one of natural beauty and historical significance for Middlesbrough. The sign proposed would take away from the historical and picturesque nature of the area. The size of the sign is of particular issue. Currently, the hospital has been operating for a few years and no sign has ever been required in the past for people to find it. Also, no large sign was needed when the building work was taking place and many lorries were coming in and out of the site every day. Hence, the argument that a sign of that size, design and appearance is needed now is incorrect.

I am glad that since those comments were submitted a small brown hospital road sign has been added to the lamppost on Church Lane. This road sign, as I have suggested in my previous comments, is sufficient to fulfilling the purpose of directing visitors to the hospital without taking away from the beauty of the area that includes Middlesbrough's only grade one listed building and one of Middlesbrough's oldest churches. The design of the sign remains unsuitable for the area and is not required due to the clear and usefully brown sign on the lamp post. For these reasons I remain opposed to the proposals.

48 St Marys Walk

Regarding the above application, we are resident on St Marys Walk (no 48) and are both members of the Parochial Church Council of St Mary's Church which is adjacent to Tees Valley Hospital.

Having examined the proposals we would wholeheartedly agree the need for a sign to be erected at the entrance as patients currently have great difficulty locating the hospital. We feel that the position of the sign would be vastly improved if it was to be on the opposite corner of the driveway to the hospital on the land in front of the substation. Not only would improve the visibility for anyone approaching from Church Lane (the designated address of the hospital) or St Mary's Walk but it would be visually better and not impinge on the view of the Hospital or St Mary's Church.

During construction, a small sign was attached to the lamp post at the entrance of the site from St. Mary's Walk/Church Lane. This was sufficient for the delivery and construction vehicle drivers to find the site with ease. A small hospital road sign attached to a lamppost/sign post would be more than sufficient to fulfil the purpose of directing people to the hospital and it would not take away from the natural beauty of the area. The design of the proposed sign is too big and too garish and does not fit in with the area.

I hope that the Planning Committee agree that a sign of that size and design is not in keeping with the area and that a smaller, more appropriate, and yet just as effective sign would suffice.

PLANNING CONSIDERATION AND ASSESSMENT

1. The sign is intended to act as a locational sign, defining the access and arrival at the entrance to the hospital which is located further to the east. The sign would be positioned behind the existing wall and approximately 1.4m of the signs 2.4m height would be visible above the wall as viewed from outside the site. The sign is of a modern appearance with modern lettering, colouring and materials. The key planning considerations for the proposed sign are its impact on highway safety, impact on the amenity associated with surrounding properties and the impact on the surrounding heritage assets and general character of the area. These are considered as follows;

Impact on Highway Safety

2. The proposed sign is located on the eastern side of St Mary's Walk on the outside edge of a turn in the highway and behind the wall forming the overall site boundary and as such will not unduly affect forward visibility of vehicles using Church Lane / St Mary's Walk or vehicles entering / existing the Hospital site and it is therefore considered to be in accordance with relevant local and national planning policy guidance which requires new development and structures to not have significant harm on highway safety.

Impact on Amenity Associated with Surrounding Properties

3. The proposed sign would be set on the opposing side of the highway to residential properties, is non-illuminated and would in part be screened by the perimeter wall to the site. In view of these matters, although visible from surrounding properties, the proposed sign would not unduly affect residential amenity associated with these properties in accordance with Local Plan Policy DC1.

Impact on Character of the Area

4. The character of the area is defined by the residential properties lining the opposing side of Church Lane / St Mary's Walk, the openness of the site immediately adjacent to the signs proposed position and the proximity of the heritage asset of St Mary's Church. The sign is proposed to be positioned behind an existing wall, set a relatively significant distance away from the Church and as such would not dominate this building. Similarly, it is also set approximately 6m from St Mary's Walk itself, with a grass verge, footpath, further grass verge and the wall all intervening and this is considered to significantly reduce any dominance the sign has in this position but also remove it slightly from being part of the appearance of the road corridor, which is considered to be very positive in its own right.
5. In view of these matters and the expanse of open space to the north / east of the sign, it is considered that the proposed sign would be a very small addition within this setting and not unduly compromise the character of the area.

Impact on Heritage Assets

6. The Council has received a number of objections to the proposed sign in relation to its size and appearance and based on the photo montage submitted with the application, the sign was considered to appear large and somewhat out of keeping with its surroundings. A revised scheme was sought from the applicant in order to address concerns and a revised scheme was submitted for the single sign being considered.
7. Being located within the Acklam Hall Conservation Area and in relative close proximity to the locally listed St Mary's Church, and at more distance, the Grade I Acklam Hall, due consideration must be given to the impact or potential for the sign to impact on the setting / significance of these heritage assets.
8. The significance of the assets lies partly in their history, their design and the space around them although this has changed from their inception. Modern signs are not automatically inappropriate within the setting of historic buildings and are often a way of formalising recognition / information / direction in a contrasting way to the heritage asset and by doing so can allow the heritage and its significance to be separated from the need to provide signage / advertising.
9. St Mary's Church is within the same view that the sign will be within from some of the surrounding area, but Acklam Hall would be more distanced. The sign relates to the Hospital and not the Hall and as such should not take on a role of being overly elaborate or grand and it is considered that the proposed scheme achieves this. It is positioned in the appropriate place from a functional perspective and would be of a scale which, although visible in the setting of the locally listed St Mary's Church, would not unduly affect either its setting or its significance. In relation to Acklam Hall, it is set away from the areas where there is a strong visual recognition of the Hall and its key viewpoints which are largely related to its front, and being located on the

periphery of the Acklam Hall Site, it is considered that the proposed sign would not adversely affect either the significance or setting of the historic building, thereby being in accordance with national and local planning policy in this regard.

10. The character of the Acklam Hall Conservation Area is one of several aspects given the more recent developments within it. The proposed sign is at the rear of the Hall, away from its more prominent and arguably more significant aspect / part of its setting. The sign is located in close proximity to St Marys Walk / Church Road and the associated road corridor. The sign is arguably, more associated with the position and character of the highway and properties in St Mary's Walk than Acklam Hall due to its position and is also closely associated with St Mary's Church. Since the erection of the Tees Valley Hospital the rear of the Acklam Hall site has altered significantly, with the hospital presenting a much more modern and contrasting form of development than the Hall / Church. The sign would be within the same view as the hospital and as such would not unduly affect the existing character of this area.
11. The Council's Conservation Officer considers that due to the signs size and lack of illumination it should not affect the heritage assets.

Conclusion

12. The proposed signage would not unduly affect the character of the area, the amenity of surrounding residents or harm the setting or significance of the surrounding heritage assets and is therefore considered to accord with relevant Local and National Planning Policy.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONDITIONS

Approve with Conditions

1. Time Period

The permission hereby granted for display of the proposed advertisement(s) shall expire five years from the date of this notice.

Reason: As is required by part 3 (para 16(2)c) of the Town & Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007.

2. Approved Plans

The development hereby approved shall be carried out in complete accordance with the plans and specifications dated 20th April 2020 and shall relate to no other plans.

3155-PHS-XX-ZZ-DR-A-900 REV P02
3155-PHS-XX-ZZ-DR-A-9000 REV P02

Reason: To ensure a satisfactory form of development and for the avoidance of doubt.

Reason For Approval

The application is satisfactory in that the design and appearance of the signage accords with the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and, where appropriate, the Council has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive way in line with paragraph 132 of the NPPF (2019). The application is therefore considered to be acceptable, fully in accordance with the relevant policy guidance and there are no material considerations which indicate that the application should be refused.

Case Officer: Andrew Glossop

Committee Date: 10.07.2020

Appendix 2: Proposed Sign Design

