

Committee Report
Planning Committee on 12 January, 2011

Item No. 5
Case No. 10/2704

RECEIVED: 18 October, 2010

WARD: Kensal Green

PLANNING AREA: Harlesden Consultative Forum

LOCATION: 2 Scrubs Lane, London, NW10 6RB

PROPOSAL: Continued display of free-standing, internally illuminated sign, incorporating non-illuminated signage for the City Mission Church' to the rear, on site of church on south side of Harrow Road, adjacent to existing petrol station

APPLICANT: City Mission Community Project

CONTACT: JC Decaux UK Ltd

PLAN NO'S:

A0686/01

A0686/02

RECOMMENDATION

Refuse Consent

EXISTING

The subject site is located on the south-western corner of the junction between Harrow Road and Scrubs Lane and is dissected by the borough boundary between the LB Brent and the LB Hammersmith & Fulham. The site is currently occupied by a three-storey church building and two advertisement hoarding's. The first advertisement hoarding is located on the southern side of the site, adjacent to Scrubs Lane, within the LB Hammersmith & Fulham. The second advertisement hoarding, which is 7.5m in height and 5m in width, is located towards the north-western corner of the site, close to Harrow Road and adjacent to the site boundary with the neighbouring petrol station. This advertisement hoarding is located within the LB Brent and is the subject of the current application for Advertisement Consent.

PROPOSAL

See above

HISTORY

ADVERTISEMENT HISTORY

Advertisement Consent (03/3278) was granted on the 5th February 2004 for the erection of an internally illuminated 7.5m x 5m advertisement hoarding's on the site, located south of Harrow Road, close to the boundary with the adjoining petrol station. In accordance with Regulation 13(5)b

of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992, consent to display this advert was granted for a period of 5 years. As such, this consent expired on the 5th February 2009.

Two previous Advertisement Consent applications have recently been submitted in pursuance of this issue. The first application (10/0595), sought to retain the hoarding granted under the 2004 consent and erect a new 6m x 3m hoarding on the north-eastern corner of the site, adjacent to the junction between Harrow Road and Scrubs Lane. This application was refused by the Planning Committee, on the 1st July 2010, on both visual amenity and highway safety grounds. Following this refusal to grant Advertisement Consent, a new application (10/1819), omitting the proposed 6m x 3m hoarding, was submitted seeking consent only for the continued display of the 7.5m x 5m sign. This application was refused under delegated powers on the 23rd August 2010, this time for reasons relating solely to the impact on visual amenity as follows:-

"The proposed continued display of the internally illuminated hoarding on Harrow Road, by virtue of its prominent location and excessive size and display, would be detrimental to the visual amenity and character of the street-scene, resulting in visual clutter and related poorly to buildings and public realm improvements on the site contrary to policies BE2 and BE21 of Brent's Unitary Development Plan 2004 and Supplementary Planning Guidance 8 'Advertisements Other than Shops'."

The applicant has lodged an appeal against the decision of the Council to refuse consent for the continued display of the 7.5m x 5m hoarding and this matter is now being considered by the Planning Inspectorate. However, the applicant now seeks Advertisement Consent to retain the hoarding, incorporating proposed alterations, and it is this proposal that now forms the basis of application under consideration..

OTHER PLANNING HISTORY

In addition to the specific planning history relating to the display of advertisements, there have been a number of other planning related applications on the site, including the planning application (08/0282) under which permission was granted for the erection of the church building which now stands on the site. This permission was subject to a number of planning conditions, some of which have not yet been fully met. In particular, the development fails to comply with planning condition 9 which sought the retention of a number of public art giraffe sculptures that were present on the site prior to the development of the church building. The Council's Enforcement Team has served a breach of condition notice (E/10/0018) in respect of this matter and negotiations between Officers and the Church are on-going in an attempt to resolve this matter.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

London Borough of Brent Unitary Development Plan 2004

BE2 Townscape: Local Context & Character
BE7 Public Realm: Streetscape
BE21 Advertisement Hoardings

Supplementary Planning Guidance 8 "Advertisements other than shops"

SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT

N/A

CONSULTATION

EXTERNAL

Consultation letters, dated 17th November 2010, were sent to Ward Councillors and 43 neighbouring owners/occupiers. Two letters of objection have been received in response. The concerns of the objectors generally relate to the visual impact of the advertising hoarding on the surrounding area.

Ward Councillors James Powney and Bobby Thomas have both indicated their support for the current application.

INTERNAL

Transportation Unit - The Council's Transportation Unit have raised no highway safety objections to the application.

REMARKS

CURRENT PROPOSAL

As discussed in the 'History' section of the report, the Council have recently, on two occasions, refused consent for an application to retain the existing hoarding on site. The current proposal also envisages the retention of the hoarding, but now involves alterations to the rear, facing westward along Harrow Road, involving the installation of a painted steel covering with a non-illuminated inset sign advertising the presence of the church. The previous applications for the retention of the existing hoarding were refused consent on the basis that it results in harm to the visual amenity and character of the streetscene due its prominent location, excessive size and display. The proposed amendments to the sign do not affect the siting or size of the existing hoarding and therefore it is difficult to envisage how the harm identified under the previous application would now be overcome. The section below sets out the on-going concerns in relation to the retention of the existing hoarding.

POLICY CONTEXT

The Council's adopted policy and guidance for assessing planning applications that involve the display of advertisement hoardings are primarily set out in Policy BE21 of the Unitary Development Plan 2004 and SPG8 'Advertisements other than shops'. Policy BE21 and SPG8 provide guidance in terms of assessing amenity and public safety, on which to judge the effects of any advertisement. The Council recognises that poorly located advertisement hoarding's can be particularly obtrusive and in some locations pose a danger to highway and pedestrian safety. Therefore, advertisement hoarding's will only be deemed acceptable where they enhance the appearance of an area and satisfy the provisions of policy BE21. For reference policy BE21 states that advertisement hoarding's will not be approved in the following areas:

- (a) Predominately residential areas;
- (b) On or adjacent to conservation areas and listed buildings;
- (c) On open space, or where they would block important views across it, or where they would obscure other important views, landscaping or groups of trees;
- (d) Where it would lead to advertisement clutter, detract from public realm enhancements within the area and/or prejudice regeneration initiatives;
- (e) On railway embankments; and
- (f) On major roads and road junctions where distraction to drivers could be prejudicial to highway safety.

In consideration of the above there are concerns, set out under previous application, that the proposal does not satisfy paragraphs: c & d of policy BE21 and these issues are expanded upon below.

IMPACT ON THE STREETSCENE

Notwithstanding, the grant of advertisement consent in 2004 for a similar hoarding, the size and scale of the hoarding is now deemed excessive and particularly obtrusive contrary to policy BE21 of the UDP 2004 and Supplementary Planning Guidance 8 (SPG8). Adopted guidance SPG8 states that hoarding's should respect the scale and character of any buildings nearby and policy BE21 notes that they will only be approved where they would enhance the character and appearance of the locality. In consideration of these points, the size, scale and prominent location of the proposed hoarding is considered to significantly detract from the local streetscape and appears visually obtrusive when viewed from various points along Harrow Road.

The advertisement hoarding adds to the existing clutter of this prominent location, particularly when viewed from the west along Harrow Road, alongside canopies, signs and hoarding's associated with the adjacent petrol station. The fact that the sign towers over the existing Totem petrol station sign (most obviously illustrated when looking west along Harrow Road) is an illustration of the sheer incongruous height and scale of the hoarding. In terms of accordance with policy and adopted guidance, the proposed hoarding would not serve to enhance the appearance of the area as the hoarding is completely disproportionate to the size and scale of the existing built environment. The internal illumination of the sign also fails to comply with SPG8, whereby illuminated adverts larger than 10m² are not normally permitted.

The introduction of the non-illuminated signage on the back of the existing sign does little to overcome the planning problems clearly set out previously. Indeed, although the proposal may tidy up the rear of the sign, it also introduces still more signage to the site which already suffers from visual clutter as described elsewhere. It does not make a proposal previously considered to be unacceptable on two occasions, acceptable.

RELATIONSHIP WITH CHURCH DEVELOPMENT

The advertisement is located within the curtilage of, and in close proximity to, the newly constructed church building. When permission was granted for the erection of the church building, several planning conditions were attached, some of which have not yet been complied with. Some of these conditions sought to secure public realm enhancements through landscaping proposals and the retention of previously funded artwork sculptures. As such, it is important to consider the impact of the continued display of the advertisement hoarding on the approved development, although not fully implemented, and the public realm enhancements that were to be secured by condition. This is particularly pertinent to the application as this development had not been approved at the time of the previous consent granted in 2004.

The approved church development envisaged the formation of an open play area around the front of the site which would be buffered by soft landscaping with additional tree planting to be provided both within the site and on the street along Harrow Road. Furthermore, a condition was attached to the permission requiring the protection and retention of existing giraffe sculptures (see 'History' section) as these were considered to form a 'significant landmark' in an otherwise 'featureless environment'. These detail were considered to provide an attractive and suitable setting for the development, particularly given that consent for the existing hoarding was soon to expire. In seeking to retain the hoarding, given its size and dominant appearance, it is considered that this would detrimentally affect the approved setting of the development causing harm to the general appearance of the church building.

CONCLUSION

Officers understand that the continued display of the advertisement hoarding provides added revenue for the church, which is no different to any landowner who may wish to have a similar advert erected on their land. However, for the reasons noted above, and despite the proposed alterations, the proposed advertisement hoarding is deemed to be unacceptable by reason of its

excessive size and overbearing appearance which would detract significantly from the streetscape and the existing buildings. As such the application is contrary to adopted policies BE2 and BE21 of the UDP 2004 and guidance contained SPG8. Furthermore, the advertisement hoarding would serve to detract from reinstated artwork and landscaping as required by conditions 9 & 12 of planning permission 08/0282.

REASONS FOR CONDITIONS

RECOMMENDATION: Refuse Consent

CONDITIONS/REASONS:

- (1) The proposed continued display of the internally illuminated hoarding on Harrow Road, incorporating non-illuminated signage for the City Mission Church' to the rear, would, by virtue of its prominent location and excessive size, scale and display, be detrimental to the visual amenity and character of the streetscene, resulting in visual clutter and harm to the setting of buildings and public realm improvements on the site contrary to policies BE2 and BE21 of Brent's Unitary Development Plan 2004 and Supplementary Planning Guidance 8 'Advertisements Other than Shops'.

INFORMATIVES:

None Specified

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS:

London Borough of Brent Unitary Development Plan 2004
Supplementary Planning Guidance 8:- Advertisements (other than shops)
Two letters of objection

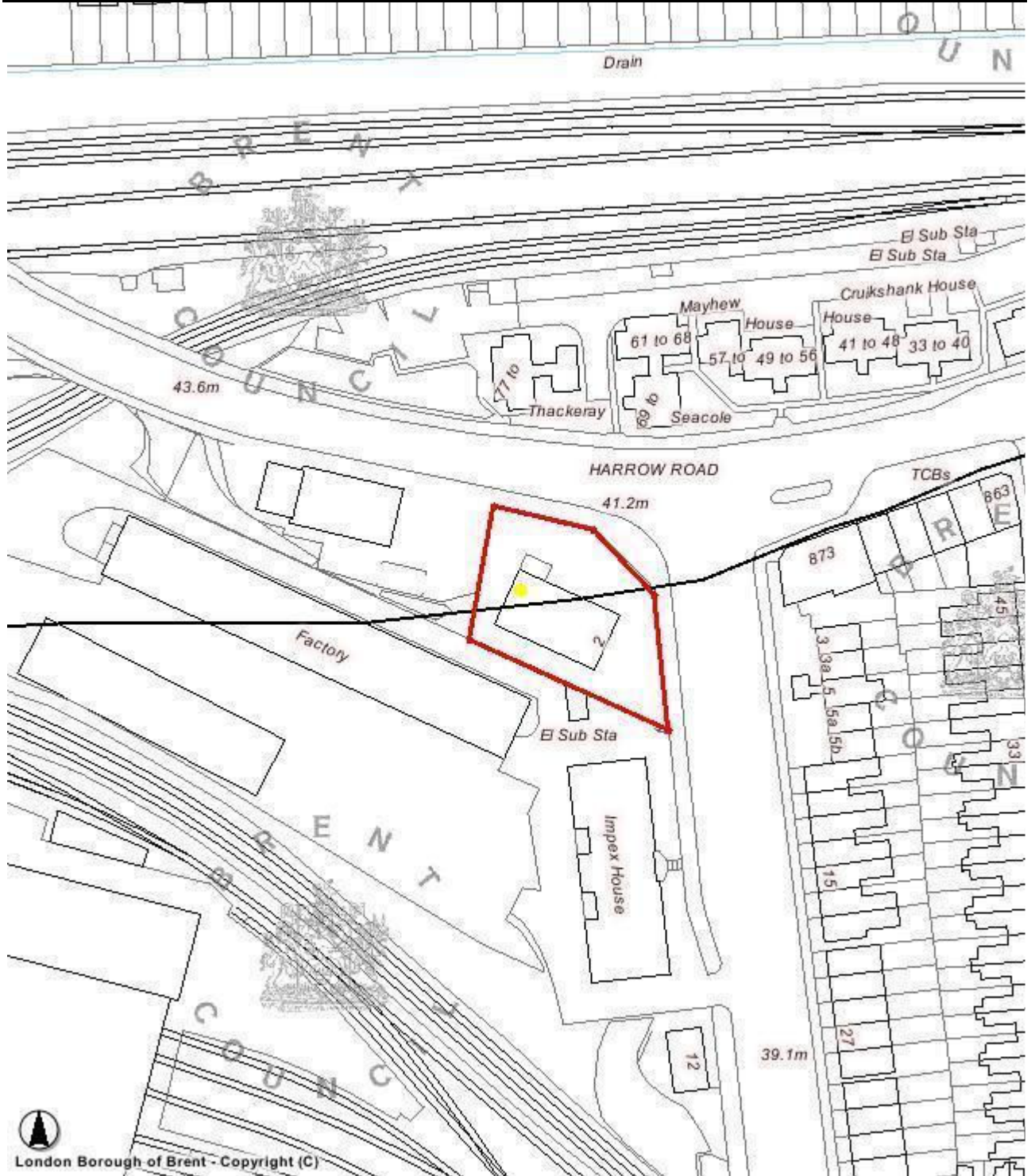
Any person wishing to inspect the above papers should contact Ben Martin, The Planning Service, Brent House, 349 High Road, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 6BZ, Tel. No. 020 8937 5231



Planning Committee Map

Site address: 2 Scrubs Lane, London, NW10 6RB

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