

**REFERENCE NO: CR/2018/0835/ADV**

**LOCATION:** [NCP CROSS KEYS CAR PARK, THE BROADWAY, HIGH STREET NORTHGATE, CRAWLEY](#)  
**WARD:** Northgate  
**PROPOSAL:** ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT FOR THE INSTALLATION OF 12NO. NON-ILLUMINATED POST MOUNTED SIGNS

**TARGET DECISION DATE:** 12 February 2019

**CASE OFFICER:** Ms Z. Brown

**APPLICANTS NAME:** National Car Parks  
**AGENTS NAME:**

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**PLANS & DRAWINGS CONSIDERED:**

P1015/253, Site Location Plan  
P1015/252, Crawley Signage Layout

**CONSULTEE NOTIFICATIONS & RESPONSES:-**

1. Listed Buildings Officer: Objection, the signage would visually detract from the views and vistas approaching the Church from The Broadways and Cross Keys, and would harm the special character of the area and the setting of the Listed Church.

**NEIGHBOUR NOTIFICATIONS:-**

None required.

**RESPONSES RECEIVED:-**

Three objections have been received raising the following matters:

- The car park is next to a Grade II\* Listed Building, and that the car park is out of character and does not enhance the area - *(It should be noted that this is a retrospective application for signage only, and does not relate to the ANPR camera, the use of the site as a car park, the layout of the car park, noise or pollution)*
- The bright yellow signage does not reflect the areas outstanding historic beauty.
- There are too many signs are proposed.
- Concerns regarding the proximity of the site to St John's Church, the oldest building in the town centre.
- The signs would have a negative impact on the setting of the neighbouring Grade II\* Listed St John's Church which dates from 1250 a.d.

## **REASON FOR REPORTING TO COMMITTEE:-**

The application has been called in by Councillors Guidera, Councillor Jaggard and Councillor Peck.

## **THE APPLICATION SITE:-**

- 1.1 The application site relates to an open car park located on the western side of The Broadway, within the Town Centre. The car park is located to the south of Cross Keys, and to the north of, and adjacent to, St John the Baptist which is a Grade II\* Listed Church. The car park contains 29 spaces and the entrance/exit is on the northern side onto Cross Keys opposite the charity shop. There are yellow bollards around the perimeter of the car park.
- 1.2 There are 12 existing unauthorised panel signs on the site, there are six different styles. They are yellow with black lettering/symbols. These are not the signs being considered in this application.
- 1.3 The car park is also adjacent to the High Street Conservation Area to the south and west. There are no other identified site constraints.

## **THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT:-**

- 2.1 Advertisement consent is sought for 12no. non-illuminated panel signs:
  - Sign A (Style 1) would measure 1.5m wide and 1.5m high, with a depth of 10mm and would be positioned 1.5m above ground level. It would comprise of yellow letters on a black background, the maximum height of any symbols/letters would be 25cm.
  - Sign B (Style 2) would measure 0.6m wide and 1.2m high, with a depth of 10cm. It would be positioned 0.7m above ground level. It would comprise of yellow letters on a black background, the maximum height of any symbols/letters would be 7cm.
  - Sign C (Style 3) would measure 0.45m wide and 1m high, with a depth of 10mm, and would be positioned 0.8m above ground level. It would comprise of yellow letters on a black background, the maximum height of any symbols/letters would be 5cm.
  - Sign D (Style 4) would measure 0.488m wide and 0.488m high, with a depth of 10mm, and would be positioned 0.85m above ground level. It would comprise of yellow letters on a black background, the maximum height of any symbols/letters would be 13cm.
  - Sign E (Style 5) would measure 0.4m wide and 0.6m high, with a depth of 10mm, and would be positioned 2.4m above ground level. It would comprise of yellow letters on a black background, the maximum height of any symbols/letters would be 5cm.
  - Sign F (Style 6) would measure 0.5m wide and 0.75m high, with a depth of 10mm, and would be positioned 2.25m above ground level. It would comprise of yellow letters on a black background, the maximum height of any symbols/letters would be 20cm.
- 2.2 This application does not apply to the current yellow signs with black writing currently on site.

## **PLANNING HISTORY:-**

- 3.1 Enforcement history- The application follows a complaint received by the Council last year. In a letter dated 30<sup>th</sup> August 2018 to NCP, Officers advised the applicants to remove the signs. The applicants have chosen to submit an application for advertisement consent for new signage to replace the existing signs and it is for the Planning Committee to determine the application before it on its planning merits.

- 3.2 The related application for the ANPR camera is CR/2018/0834/FUL – RETROSPECTIVE PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE INSTALLATION OF 1NO.POLE MOUNTED AUTOMATIC NUMBER PLATE RECOGNITION (ANPR) CAMERA. This is also to be considered at this meeting.
- 3.3 The use of the land for a car park was permitted in 1975 - CR/52/75 – West Side of Cross Keys, Northgate – CHANGE OF USE FOR PARKING OF MOTOR VEHICLES.
- 3.4 There is one undetermined application which relates to the application site - \_CR/2018/0079/FUL – DEMOLITION OF THE EXISTING CHURCH HALL FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF GROUND FLOOR RETAIL/COMMUNITY SPACE/APARTMENTS WITH APARTMENTS ABOVE (TOTAL 34 DWELLINGS)

## **PLANNING POLICY:-**

### 4.1 National Planning Policy Framework (2018)

- Section 12 (Achieving well designed places), paragraph 132 indicates poorly placed advertisements can have a negative impact on the appearance of the built environment. Control over outdoor advertisements should be efficient, effective and simple in concept and operation. Only those advertisements which will clearly have an appreciable impact on a building or on their surroundings should be subject to the local planning authority's detailed assessment. Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts.

### 4.2 Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015 – 2030 (adopted December 2015)

- Policy CH3 (Normal Requirements of All Development), proposals must adhere to any relevant supplementary planning guidance produced by the council including advice on signs and advertisements.
- Policy CH12: (Heritage Assets) all development should ensure that Crawley's designated and non-designated heritage assets are treated as a finite resource and that their key features or significance is not lost as a result of development.
- Policy CH15: (Listed Buildings and Structures) states that any changes must preserve the design and character of the Listed Building and have regard to its historic significance.

### 4.3 Urban Design Supplementary Planning Document (October 2016)

The Urban Design SPD is a non-statutory document which supplements the policies of the Local Plan and is applicable to this application. It contains guidelines on the standards the Council expects for the public design and the advertisement and signs. In particular, it state:

- *'Advertising and signs should not impact the visual amenity of the surrounding area and should not pose any danger to highway safety.'*
- *'Outdoor advertising should make a positive contribution to the visual environment and help to create a lively atmosphere. The guidance notes that poorly designed and inappropriately located advertisements can negatively impact the visual environment and lead to clutter and visual confusion.'*
- *'Freestanding signs can provide information, but should be in scale with pedestrians, not surrounding buildings. They should not obstruct the highway and should be user-friendly.'*

## PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:-

- 5.1 It has come to Planning Officers attention through representations and comments received during the determination of this application that there are concerns over the conduct of NCP and the issuing of Fixed Parking Notices. The comments received and issues raised above are not matters for Council as the Local Planning Authority to consider, and therefore do not form part of the formal consideration of this application. The issues in relation to this application are:
- The impact on the visual amenity of the area (including the setting of the Listed Building/Conservation Area);
  - The impact on public safety and the highway.

### The impact on the visual amenity of the area (including the setting of the Listed Building/Conservation Area.

- 5.2 The car park is positioned on the western side of The Broadway and provides parking for 29 vehicles. The existing surface carpark is extremely visible in the streetscene of The Broadway given its open character, whereby it offers a break in the built form to the north and a contrast to the curtilage of the Grade II\* Listed Church, St Johns the Baptist which is surrounded by a landscaped graveyard, with mature trees and some hedging along the northern boundary. The boundary of the carpark is demarcated by yellow bollards.
- 5.3 There are 12no. unauthorised existing yellow panel signs, of size different styles, sizes and designs around the car park. These vary in size from 1.5m(h)x 1.5m(w) to 0.48m(h) x 0.48m(w). It is proposed that the existing signs are replaced with black background and yellow text signs of the same sizes/design. The largest panel sign would be positioned at the entrance/exit to the car park, surrounded by two other panel signs, there would be a cluster of signs in the centre of the site around the pay station area, and smaller panel signs on the western, eastern and southern sides.
- 5.4 The number of signs is considered to be excessive. When approaching the car park from north along The Broadway, the entrance to the car park appears overly cluttered, with a proliferation of signage of varying sizes and positioning, this is worsened by the excessive number of signs within the centre of the site which are also in view when approaching from the north. Similarly when approaching the site from the east the unnecessary number of signs also detrimentally impacts the streetscene. Although the choice of colours for the signs whereby they would have a black background and yellow lettering would appear less visually intrusive than the existing bright yellow signs, there appears to be no attempt to create a consistent and coordinated approach to the size/scale and positioning of signage around the car park.
- 5.5 Not only would it detrimentally impact upon the visual amenity of the streetscene of this area of The Broadway, it is also considered to detrimentally impact upon the views and setting of St John's Church, the Grade II\* Listed Building and the High Street Conservation Area. The Listed Buildings Officer has stated that the car park signage visually distracts from the views and vistas approaching the church, and is considered to cause substantial harm to the special character of the area and the setting of the listed church. Although there is some vegetation along the northern boundary of the church yard, there are still some open views to the Grade II\* Listed Building, particularly when approaching from the north along The Broadway. As a result the excessive number of signs in and around the site would be incongruous and would detrimentally impact views of the church.
- 5.6 There is a concurrent application for a pole mounted ANPRA camera, which is considered to be acceptable in its own right (not including the signage), although in association with the proposed signage it would add to the visual clutter in this area. It is the subject of the separate planning application CR/2018/0834/FUL that is also for consideration by this committee.

- 5.7 Overall the proposed number, siting and size of the signs are considered harmful to the visual amenity of the site, the streetscene and the setting and views of the Listed Building St John's Church/High Street Conservation Area. It is therefore not considered to accord with Policies CH3, CH12 and CH15 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan (2015-2030), the Urban Design SPD (2016) and the NPPF (2018).

#### The impact on public safety and the highway

- 5.8 Although the signs would not be illuminated they have been assessed against the West Sussex County Council Illuminated Signs Standing Advice to provide an indication of any likely impact upon safety. The guidance states:

**1. Is any of the proposed signage within the public maintainable highway?**

No

**2. Does the proposed signage exceed recommended maximum luminance levels?**

The freestanding signs are not illuminated.

**3. Is the proposed signage located within a visibility splay?**

The freestanding signs are not located within a visibility splay.

**4. Is the proposed signage likely to cause a distraction to motorists?**

The freestanding signs are not likely to cause a distraction to motorists.

**5. Does the proposed signage overhang the publicly maintainable highway? Is the overhanging signage at least 2.4 metres above the publicly maintainable highway and 500mm from the carriageway edge?**

The signs do not overhang the publicly maintainable highway.

- 5.9 The signs would not therefore be considered to have a harmful impact upon public safety.

#### **CONCLUSIONS:-**

- 6.1 The signs, by virtue of their excessive number, varying sizes and proportions are considered to give a disjointed and cluttered appearance to the car park and its surroundings and to negatively impact on the visual amenity of the site, the streetscene of The Broadway and the setting and views of the Grade II\* Listed Building St John's Church within High Street Conservation Area. It is therefore considered that the proposed advertisements are unacceptable and contrary to the NPPF (2018), Policies CH3, CH12 and CH15 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan and the guidance contained within the Urban Design SPD (2016), it is therefore recommended that the application be refused.

#### **RECOMMENDATION RE: CR/2018/0835/ADV**

REFUSE - For the following reason(s):-

1. The signs, by virtue of their excessive number, varying sizes and proportions are considered to result in a disjointed and cluttered appearance to the site that would negatively impact on the visual amenity of the area, the streetscene of The Broadway and the setting and views of the Grade II\* Listed Building St John's Church/High Street Conservation Area. It is therefore considered that the proposed signs conflict with the NPPF (2018), Policies CH3, CH12 and CH15 of the Crawley Borough Local Plan and the guidance contained within the Urban Design SPD (2016),



# ArcGIS Web Map

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