
15. ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT APPLICATION – PROPOSED INTERPRETATION PANELS AT BLACKA MOOR NATURE RESERVE, SHEFFIELD (NP/S/1116/1157, P.5572 + 7293, 21/11/2016, 427615 / 380592, MN)

APPLICANT: Mr Nabil Abbas on behalf of Sheffield Wildlife Trust

Site and Surroundings

Blacka Moor Nature Reserve covers approximately 180 hectares of land, and is located on the eastern edge of the National Park, and to the west of Dore and Totley, Sheffield. The Reserve is a mix of woodland and open moors.

The Reserve is within the South Pennine Moors Special Area of Conservation, the Eastern Peak District Moors Site of Special Scientific Interest, and the Peak District Moors (South Pennine Moors Phase 1) Special Protection Area.

Proposal

The erection of three interpretation panels to display information for the Sheffield Wildlife Trust including details of walks, land management, wildlife, and of the Trust itself. The angled information panels would be set in a wooden frame and have dimensions of approximately 95cm x 70cm and would be supported above ground by two timber legs. The total height above ground would be 1.2m.

The signs are proposed in three different locations within the Reserve. One is on the woodland footpath adjacent to Shorts Lane car park, one is on the woodland footpath adjacent to Stoney Ridge car park (next to the A625), and the other is on the woodland footpath adjacent to Strawberry Lee Lane car park.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the application be **APPROVED** subject to the following conditions:

1. **Statutory time limit**
2. **Completion in accordance with submitted plans**
3. **Standard advertisement regulations conditions**

Key Issues

Advertisement consent applications can only be evaluated on grounds of amenity and public safety. In this instance amenity is considered in terms of the landscape impact that the signs would have due to their countryside locations.

History

No relevant history

Consultations

Highway Authority – No response at time of writing.

City Council – No response at time of writing.

Representations

4 letters of objection have been received. The grounds for objection are as follows:

- The signs appear obtrusive and out of keeping with their countryside locations
- The signs are not necessary
- The signs would attract vandalism
- The signs are an advert for the Wildlife Trust rather than being interpretation boards
- The signs pose a danger to users of the paths
- The accuracy of the wording on the signs is disputed
- The signs may not be properly maintained

The full comments can be read on the Authority's website.

Main Policies

Relevant Core Strategy policies: Policy RT1 states that the National Park will support facilities which enable recreation, environmental education and interpretation where they are appropriate to the National Park's valued characteristics. It also states that new provision must justify its location in relation to environmental capacity, scale and intensity of use.

Relevant Local Plan policies: Policy LC11 states that consent for the display of outdoor advertisements will be granted provided that several criteria are observed. These include that they do not result in proliferation of signage, do not result in a threat to road safety, are of a high standard of design and materials, and do not detract from the site and its surroundings.

National Planning Policy Framework

It is considered that in this case there is no significant conflict between prevailing policies in the Development Plan and more recent Government guidance in the NPPF with regard to the issues that are raised.

Wider Policy context

The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 state that advertising consent applications can only be evaluated on grounds of amenity and public safety. It specifies factors relative to amenity to include the general characteristics of the locality, including the presence of any feature of historic, architectural, cultural or similar interest. Factors relevant to public safety include the safety of any persons using a highway.

Assessment

Each of the panels would be located adjacent to a footpath where there is good visibility in both directions for walkers or other users of the path. The routes are not thoroughfares for vehicles, and there would be no illumination of the signs that might cause undue distraction to road users of the nearby highways. It is therefore not considered that the advertisements would create any risk to public or highway safety.

The nature of the panels is such that they need to be visible from the public footpath.

Whilst located in the countryside, they would not appear entirely isolated, being closely related to walls/fences, and gateways. In addition, the signs are located within areas of woodland which serves to limit their wider visibility and reduce their impact to only their immediate setting.

The materials, being plastic for the signs with timber frames and legs, are recessive and are considered to further reduce the impact on the amenity of the area.

The proposed signage would replace the existing timber Blacka Moor signage that is present on two of the sites, and it is not considered that the proposed signage would result in an unacceptable proliferation of signage due to the size and visual impacts of the proposed signage, as discussed above.

Overall, the signs are considered to have a less than significant impact on the appearance of the area, and to conserve its amenity.

Conclusion

The proposal relates to the erection of three modest signs which meets the aims of the National Park to improve interpretation and understanding of the area.

The design and siting are considered such that they have no negative impact on the amenity or public safety of the area.

The application complies with relevant local planning policies and is recommended for approval as there are no other material considerations that warrant making a different decision.

Human Rights

Any human rights issues have been considered and addressed in the preparation of this report.

List of Background Papers (not previously published)

Nil