

Planning Committee

29 May 2019



Application No.	19/00444/ADV		
Site Address	Charlton Lane Eco park, Charlton Lane, Shepperton, TW17 8QA		
Proposal	Retention of freestanding 6.52m tall non-illuminated sign at entrance (retrospective)		
Applicant	SUEZ Recycling and Recovery Ltd.		
Ward	Halliford and Sunbury West		
Call in details	The application has been called in by Cllr Beardsmore because of concerns about the visual amenity		
Case Officer	Kelly Walker		
Application Dates	Valid: 28/08/2019	Expiry: 23/05/2019	Target: over 8 weeks Extension of Time Agreed.
Executive Summary	The proposal is for the retention of the display of a large free standing sign at the entrance to the Eco Park site on Charlton Lane. It is considered to have an acceptable impact on the visual amenity of the area and on highway safety and is recommended for approval subject to conditions.		
Recommended Decision	This application is recommended for approval.		

MAIN REPORT

1. Development Plan

- 1.1 There are no policies in the Council's Core Strategy and Policies DPD 2009 which refer to advertisements. However the advice contained within the paragraph 132 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 is relevant as it specifically refers to advertisements..

2. Relevant Planning History

10/00947/SCC Re-Consultation: Development of a Waste Management Eco Park, comprising: a Gasification Facility; Anaerobic Digestion Facility; Community Recycling Facility, Recyclables Bulking Facility; Education / Visitor Centre and Offices; Other

SBC Object
SCC Approval
04.07.2011

3. Description of Current Proposal

- 3.1 The site is at the Charlton Lane Waste Management Facility located along Charlton Lane in Shepperton. The site is approximately 5.22 hectares and lies within the Green Belt. Charlton Village is 400m to the north west and Upper Halliford is 500m to the southeast. The site is bounded by the M3 to the northwest and Charlton Lane to the south. There is a golf course on the other side of the road. Waste transfer had been carried out at the site since the 1940s and the site has a long planning history. More recently planning permission was granted by Surrey County Council for the development of a Waste Management Eco Park. This has been substantially built, however works are still continuing on site. It includes a Gasification Facility, Anaerobic Digestion Facility, Recyclables Bulking Facility, Education/Visitors centre and offices.
- 3.2 The proposal is for the retention of a non-illuminated freestanding sign measuring some 6.52m in maximum height. It consists of 2 upstands on an L shaped base of 1.5m in width and depth. One upstand displays the name of the site 'Eco Park' and the other reads 'Welcome to the Eco Park'. The maximum height of the lettering is 0.89m. It is made of coated metal which is coloured green. It is located on the traffic island at the entrance to the site adjoining Charlton Lane.
- 3.3 The proposed site layout and elevation plans are provided as an Appendix.

4 Consultations

- 4.1 The following table shows those bodies consulted and their response.

Consultee	Comment
County Highway Authority	No objection, subject to conditions

5. Public Consultation

- 5.1 A total of 27 neighbouring properties were notified of the planning application. Letters have been received from 13 properties objecting to the proposal. .
- 5.2 Reasons for objecting include:-
- Out of keeping with residential and village nature of the area
 - Too large
 - Bright green colour does not blend into the location
 - More fitting for an urban/industrial setting
 - Eyesore and distract/confuse drivers
 - Large, ugly and unnecessary/inappropriate sign
 - Obtrusive, dominant, overbearing

- There are already lots of signs
- There is a scout hut next door and the safety of the signage is questioned
- Probably the biggest road side advert in Spelthorne
- Sets a dangerous precedent
- Not easy to understand what the sign says
- No need for it to be illuminated
- Site area was changed to include highway land

The following comments are not planning issues or do not relate to the proposal:

- Did not get permission in advance
- It is not 'Eco' or a 'Park'
- Site use should not have been approved
- Sign demonstrates how this taxpayer funded project has been handled

6. Planning Issues

- Visual amenity
- Highway safety

7. Planning Considerations

7.1 Impact of the signage

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) para 132 states that, *'The quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed. A separate consent process within the planning system, controls the display of advertisements, which should be operated in a way which is simple, efficient and effective. Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts.'* As such, the impact of the proposed signage on highway safety and amenity issues are the only issues which can be taken into account in the consideration of this application.

7.2 Visual amenity

The proposed sign is not seen in the context of a residential street scene when travelling along Charlton Lane, with the closest houses being located to the south east, over the railway bridge. On the opposite side of the road is a golf club, with a garden centre and farm located to the north west over the M3 motorway bridge. As such, the road at this point is not within a residential area. The application site has long been established as a waste transfer station and the name and use of the site cannot be taken into account when determining this advertisement application. As such the sign is not considered, in principle, to be out of place or out of keeping with the locality.

7.3 It is acknowledged that the sign is large, in overall height in particular at 6.52m tall, which along with its green colour makes the sign clearly visible. The design of the sign is unusual and imaginative. The signage relates to the use and name of the site, welcoming people to it and is seen in the context of the site which itself is very large in width and depth. The sign is also located in

front of a large gasification facility building fronting Charlton Road. Therefore this large building is the backdrop to the sign and the sign has a design connection with the site and its buildings, resulting in it not appearing overly large or out of place. Most people passing the sign will be in vehicles, rather than walking and will either be travelling past the Eco Park site or entering it.. The proposed sign is not considered to be out of scale or out of keeping with the locality and would not be over dominant, or appear visually obtrusive. As such it is not considered, in this instance, to be a poorly placed advertisement and it will not have a negative impact on the appearance of the built environment in which it is located.. Therefore the sign is considered acceptable in terms of visual amenity in accordance with the NPPF. Whilst the site is located within the Green Belt, in view of the context of the existing Eco Park, it is not considered the advertisement would harm the visual amenities of the Green Belt.

7.4 Highway safety

The Highway Authority have raised no objection to the sign in terms of highway safety. Conditions have been recommended to be attached to the consent to ensure the sign is not illuminated and also that it is maintained. The maintenance condition is required under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007. As such the signage is considered to be acceptable from a highway safety point of view in accordance with the NPPF.

7.5 Other matters.

The Council does not have any planning control over the name of the site. As such, no objection can be made to the name of the site displayed on the sign. In addition, although the sign is already in existence this is because the applicant had included the details of the sign in the planning application for the Eco Park submitted to Surrey County Council in 2010 and therefore thought that permission had been granted. However adverts require their own application which are dealt with by Spelthorne Borough Council, hence the application now having been submitted. Notwithstanding this, the fact that the proposal is retrospective is not a reason to object to the signage. In addition, the use of the site has no relevance to whether the sign is acceptable on amenity and highway safety grounds.

7.6 Conclusion

Therefore, the proposed advertisement is considered to be acceptable in terms of amenity and highway safety grounds and the application is recommended for approval.

8. Recommendation

8.1 GRANT subject to the following conditions:

1. That the approved signage shall not be illuminated

Reason: - In the interest of visual amenity.

2. The sign for the display of advertisements, shall be maintained in a clean and tidy condition to the reasonable satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.
3. Any structure or hoarding erected or used principally for the purpose of displaying advertisements shall be maintained in a safe condition.
4. Where an advertisement is required under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations to be removed. the removal shall be carried out to the reasonable satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.
5. No advertisement is to be displayed without the permission of the owner of the site or any other person with an interest in the site entitled to grant permission.-
6. No advertisement shall be sited or displayed so as to obscure or hinder the ready interpretation of any road traffic sign, railway signal or aid to navigation by water or air so as otherwise to render hazardous the use of any highway, railway, waterway or aerodrome (civil or military).

The reason for the decision of the Council to consent to the display of the advertisements subject to compliance with the conditions 2-6 specified in the second schedule 13 to comply with the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007.

1. Decision Making: Working in a Positive and Proactive Manner

In assessing this application, officers have worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner consistent with the NPPF. This included the following:-

- a) Provided pre-application advice to seek to resolve problems before the application was submitted and to foster the delivery of sustainable development.
- b) Provided feedback through the validation process including information on the website, to correct identified problems to ensure that the application was correct and could be registered;
- c) Have suggested/accepted/negotiated amendments to the scheme to resolve identified problems with the proposal and to seek to foster sustainable development.
- d) Have proactively communicated with the applicant through the process to advise progress, timescales or recommendation.