

Report To:	The Planning Board	Date:	6 February 2013
Report By:	Head of Regeneration and Planning	Report No:	12/0028/CA Plan 02/13
Contact Officer:	Mike Martin	Contact No:	01475 712412
Subject:	Display of 24 no. signs on perimeter wall (in retrospect) HM Prison, Old Inverkip Road, Greenock		

SITE DESCRIPTION

HM Prison Greenock is situated on the south side of Old Inverkip Road, Greenock. Located within a residential area and enclosed by a substantial boundary wall, the prison bounds to the east Lewis Road, to the west the rear boundaries of houses in Nimmo Street, to the north the access and car parking area, and to the south an area of open ground which lies within the prison’s control.



PROPOSAL

The proposal, which is in retrospect, is for the siting of 24 information signs on the perimeter wall of the property. The signs are situated at intervals along the wall, with 10 facing east, 6 facing west, 2 facing north and 6 facing south. The signs are of two types, one measuring 1500mm in length and 610mm in height and the other 300mm square, both formed in metal and featuring a blue background with white lettering. The proposal is a joint venture between the Scottish Prison Service and Police to aid crime prevention and provides the public with the appropriate contact telephone number for Prison Watch Scotland.

Planning permission was refused in respect of the installation of 2 pole mounted CCTV security cameras within the area of open ground which lies immediately to the south of the perimeter wall in October 2012.

LOCAL PLAN POLICIES

Local Plan Policy DC1 - Development Control Advice

Inverclyde Council, as Planning Authority, will support applications for planning, listed building and advertisement consent, where applicable, which accord with the principles established in the Council's Planning Practice Advice Notes.

Planning Practice Advice Note No.13 (Signage and Advertisements) applies.

Local Plan Policy H1 - Safeguarding the Character and Amenity of Residential Areas

The character and amenity of existing residential areas, identified on the Proposals Map, will be safeguarded, and where practicable, enhanced. New residential development will be acceptable, in principle, subject to other relevant Local Plan policies.

CONSULTATIONS

The nature of the proposal did not require consultation.

PUBLICITY

The nature of the proposal did not require advertisement.

SITE NOTICES

The nature of the proposal did not require a site notice.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

An objection has been received from a neighbouring resident who considers that the number of signs is excessive and their positions are inappropriate. In particular the objector considers that position of signs facing towards the rear of neighbouring houses is obtrusive to residents, impacts adversely upon privacy, and requests that these be removed as they are not readily visible from public vantage points. The objector questions the necessity for the signs which they consider serve no beneficial purpose and is concerned that, as a consequence of the signage, the local residents may gain the reputation of being informants, to their potential detriment.

ASSESSMENT

As an application under the Control of Advertisement Regulations, the determining factors in the assessment of this application are public safety and amenity. The signs themselves do not create public safety issues, so it rests to determine the application with reference to amenity. While I note the letter of objection and concerns relating to impact on privacy, need and potential consequence for neighbours in responding to the signs, these are matters that can have no bearing on the determination of applications for advertisement consent.

Policy DC1 offers support to proposals that comply with the Council's Planning Practice Advice Notes, of which PPAN No.13 provides guidance on "Signage and Advertisements". The proposal does not fit comfortably into any of the categories directly referred to in PPAN No.13, being informative signage associated with security. So, it rests for a judgment on the amenity impact of the proposal to be made with no specific policy or supplementary planning guidance to refer to.



The wall itself is a substantial structure, and it is considered that in terms of their relative scale the signs are not unduly prominent. Indeed, I note that a number of signs may not be seen from public vantage points. Overall, I consider the impact of the signage is not such that refusal on the grounds of amenity is merited.

RECOMMENDATION

That the application be granted.

Stuart Jamieson
Head of Regeneration and Planning

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Application form and plans.
2. Inverclyde Local Plan.
3. Letters of representation.
4. PPAN No.13.
5. Consultation response.



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