



Speaking for Scotland's Buildings

Service Manager - Planning
East Lothian Council
John Muir House
Haddington EH41 3HA

11 April 2017
Your Ref: 17 /00180/
My Ref: 17.08 [EH39 4BB]
Allied case:

Dear Sir

Thank you for giving the Society the opportunity to comment on the following planning application.

17/00180/P: Land adjacent North Berwick Golf Clubhouse, Beach Rd, North Berwick. EH39 4BB
OBJECTION
Proposal: Erection of Clock Tower Structure (retrospective).

The Society objects to this application, for erection of a double-faced outdoor advertising-clock, 2806 X 1200mm and about 250 mm thick, advertising "AUDEMARS PIGUET; Le Brassus" in 8mm thick, large applied letters on each face, above the 700mm diameter clock faces. It is in the form of a tall monolith, mounted on a 1000mm deep concrete foundation largely below ground level, in a small grass plot beside a tarmacked hardstanding area (convenient for a temporary grandstand and a television control van and mobile studio?), near and SE of the ProShop, and strategically positioned immediately next the 1st tee of the famous West Links coastal Golf Course. It is clearly visible from Beach Road, and stands in this sensitive West Beach part of the designated North Berwick Conservation Area.

Firstly, the Society suggests that the Council should consider this application as an **advertisement application**, since the primary purpose of the Swiss manufacturing company is to ensure that the firm's name will appear in all future press photographs of all notable players teeing off for their round, but principally for TV- cameras to repeatedly refer to the clock when each competitor is due to tee-off, giving maximum exposure to the name of the clock's manufacturer. The proposed advertising-clock would be a permanent advertisement hoarding, at all times, and as such will require planning permission as an intrusion into the conservation area.

Furthermore, the clock tower is unsympathetic to its context, being placed upon an attractive part of the coastline. A member of the East Lothian Cases Panel wondered if the upright slab could possibly have a similarity to an historic local standing stone, but upon inspection it is obvious that the structure is not fitting with its context.

This Society objects to both the intrusion of this over-prominent new detached advertising-clock structure on the open links, and to its use for prominent advertising of a Swiss manufacturing firm in large attached capital letters. Both the stand-alone monolith form and the prominence of the applied advertisement message on both faces make this new structure unsuitable for this publicly open and attractive site. It is damaging to the character and amenity of the designated conservation area, which should be preserved or enhanced in any decision on development. It is understood that the fact that it has already been erected is not a material consideration, and must



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not influence how the application is determined; but its removal, and the reinstatement of the site, should be a matter for prompt enforcement. The applicant is quoted in the press as saying that if planning permission were to be refused, the existing structure would be removed.

As East Lothian Council is the LPA for 'The Golf Coast' it should urgently decide on a policy with regard to the campaign by this Swiss manufacturer (and its possible competitors) to plant a standard illuminated stand-alone advertising-clock on the open course at the first tee of the principal competition golf course of every Golf Club within the county, and similarly in neighboring counties. The present application can be taken as an extreme test case, being a retrospective application for a site within a Conservation Area, on a beautiful and popular beachside course, for a non-illuminated free-standing advertising-clock at the first tee, on the open course. If approved (with its advertisement function separately approved) this case will become a precedent for these stand-alone advertising-clocks with illumination, being erected on other Golf Courses throughout the county. An alternative policy is to recognise that existing Golf Clubhouses normally have large external clocks, (with their makers' names on the dial in letters smaller than the hourly figures) and where such clocks are lacking, new clocks could be integrated into the architecture of this or another convenient building. Any essential timing device at the first tee should be restricted to a single, temporary (separately stationed and approved for each championship), and no more than 1100mm high. Furthermore, it should be entirely free of visible advertising (other than the maker's name on the dial, in letters in height less than half the height of the hourly numbers).

If the present application is refused permission, the adoption of some similar alternative policy will ensure consistency in dealing with similar applications for advertising-clocks, in future. Discussion at COSLA would be appropriate.

Yours

Sarah Pearce
On behalf of the East Lothian Cases Panel