

CHICHESTER HARBOUR  
AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY  
PLANNING ASSESSMENT REPORT

CHC AONB Unit Report: Fully Delegated Decision Process

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The Langstone Hotel, Northney Road, Hayling Island, Hampshire

Planning Application: **APP/20/00485**

Proposal for erection of modular clad portable building for health and wellness activities.  
(Resubmission of APP/19/00802 Amended)

**Chichester Harbour AONB Unit Recommendation – No objection**

Suggested considerations –

- schedule/samples of materials to be agreed prior to construction as per submission / application forms and drawings
- for all glazed surfaces (windows, doors, balustrades), the use of coated surface glass that is non-reflective to mitigate external reflective glare and which for rooms served by the glazed windows might also assist with keeping heat in and radiation out for the respective seasonal changes in order to minimise and reduce the amount of light illumination emitted both to the surrounding skyline and to the vertical, skyward, aspect of the new window openings
- the glazed fenestration (windows, doors, rooflights, skylights, etc.) should employ tinted glass panels, and these should be fitted with working internal screen blinds to reduce light spillage during evenings and night-times (complying with dark skies policies) in order to minimise and reduce the amount of light illumination emitted both to the surrounding skyline and to the visual horizontal aspect of the new window openings
- as part of a landscape plan to be submitted, the existing landscaping to the periphery of the site and within the blue line land of the hotel complex, particularly to the south and the east of the proposal, including the landscaping to the promontory of land into the harbour to the east, shall be retained and maintained to provide an effective landscape screen to the site and buildings
- as part of a landscape plan to be submitted, additional landscape planting comprising of a mix of hedgerow, shrubbery and trees of a native species typical of the AONB (list of native species found on page 20 of the Joint SPD Document) shall be planted to the open areas to the south of the internal access road that skirts the proposal site and thereafter maintained and retained for the duration of the buildings use as a dwelling and any loss or removal of planting within five (5) years of its provision shall be replaced with like hedgerow / shrubbery / trees
- details of other boundary enclosures shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA to control the character and appearance of the development from the surrounding wider countryside
- no works should be carried out during the bird nesting season (April to September) or if there is evidence of bat roosting (hibernation or maternity roosts)
- a lighting plan covering all external areas, including the open roof top terrace, and to the building elevations shall be submitted for approval by the LPA
- any permitted development rights associated with this development proposal should be removed to ensure the proper control and impact of the development on the surrounding area of outstanding natural beauty

Planning Approach

The statutory purpose of the AONB is to conserve and enhance the area's natural beauty. The LPA should assess the application carefully as to whether the proposed development would have a significant impact on or harm that statutory purpose. Relevant to this is the duty on public bodies to 'have regard' for that statutory purpose in carrying out their functions (Section



85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000). The Planning Practice Guidance confirms that this duty also applies to proposals outside the designated area but impacting on its natural beauty.

Chichester Harbour Conservancy, administer and safeguard the Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The aim of conserving and enhancing the areas natural beauty requires the Conservancy to consider the proposal on its landscape character aspects. Landscape covers both urban environments as well as countryside and coastal areas.

- Landscape Character

The Chichester Harbour AONB Landscape Character Assessment (CBA update 2019) prepared for the Conservancy, identifies 10 Landscape Character Types - areas of broad tracts of land with common landform, and 19 specific Landscape Character Areas - unique areas with a recognisable pattern of landscape characteristics that combine to create a distinct sense of place, and which represent discrete geographical areas of a particular landscape character type.

The Landscape Character Areas define relevant key characteristics, ecological features, important views across land and water areas, historical features, settlement character, as well as key issues to landscape condition and landscape sensitivity, together with a landscape strategy to be followed. The summary and recommendations lay out the special qualities of Chichester Harbour AONB.

- Management Plan

The Chichester Harbour AONB Management Plan (2019-2024 - Third Review April 2019) identifies 10 special qualities (page 10) that represent the exceptional features that contribute to the AONB designation. On this basis the Chichester Harbour Management Plan provides an integrated coastal zone management strategy for the Trust Port and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Relevant policies would include, Policy 1 (Conserving and Enhancing the landscape), Policy 2 (Development Management), and Policy 3 (Diversity of Habitats).

- Planning Principles

The Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Beauty Planning Principles (Management Plan version April 2019) provides guidance on development. These principles set a range of criteria to be addressed to warrant a favourable consideration in terms of likely impact within and on the AONB. Planning Principle PP01: Chichester Harbour as a Protected Area, is applicable to this and all proposals within or affecting the AONB.

Planning Principles **PP01: Chichester Harbour as a Protected Area**, sets out the key overarching approach for the AONB, in that the statutory primary purpose is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area. Great weight shall be given to the protection of the landscape, the conservation of nature, and the special qualities of Chichester Harbour and its surrounding supporting hinterland.

Planning Principle **PP09: Dark Skies**, that are adjacent to or impact on areas of nature conservation will only be supported in exceptional circumstances

- Joint Chichester Harbour AONB SPD

The Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Beauty Joint Supplementary Planning Document (2017) requires that any development proposed in the AONB should be guided by to protect, conserve, and enhance natural beauty and wildlife (Section 2 overarching principles). The SPD is adopted by both Havant Borough Council and by Chichester District Council as part of their planning policy and development control approach.

The SPD provides detailed guidance on the level of acceptable development within the AONB. All development within the AONB should follow the guidance as closely as possible. Section 8 (page 17) requires that in designing new development, consideration of the setting of the

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development in the AONB landscape must be shown as to how the proposal would contribute to the character of the area. A Landscape Visual Impact Assessment may be necessary in sensitive areas of exposed wide landscape character. The adopted guidance requires a clear demonstration that no harm is caused to the AONB.

## Relevant Planning History

The planning application history includes the following :-

**APP/19/00802** (Amended plans 2): Proposal for erection of modular clad building for health and wellness activities. CHC commented on 28 January 2020 raising no objection based on the amended plans. Application withdrawn on 26 February 2020.

**APP/18/01112**: Proposal Erection of a single-storey front extension to restaurant area; reposition frontage wall; and provide front entrance to a bar area. CHC commented on 20 February 2019 raising no objection as the proposal was not considered to be significantly noticeable or detrimental to the wider landscape character and appearance of the AONB. Application approved by the LPA on 14 December 2018.

**04/50756/017**: Proposed Extension to provide 2 storey bedroom wing and internal remodelling. Application approved by the LPA on 5 October 2004.

**02/50756/015**: Proposed Ground floor extension to the existing hotel lobby and gymnasium. Application approved by the LPA on 7 November 2002.

**01/50756/014**: Proposed Provision of new access road and car park to south of leisure centre. Application approved by the LPA on 19 November 2001.

**99/50756/009**: Proposed extension to provide spa plant room to east elevation of Health and Fitness Club. Application approved by the LPA on 25 November 1999.

## Contextual Consideration

The site lies within the AONB. The site occupies a rural countryside location to the north-east part of Hayling Island. The red-line application has a boundary with a coastal frontage and adjacent designated areas – RAMSAR, SAC, SINCE, SPA, SSSI. The Emsworth Channel Head coastline lies to the north as Swear Deep, and to the east and south. The site lies alongside and is clearly seen from the coastline and water areas within Chichester Harbour. The proposal would therefore have a visual impact the character of the AONB in this coastal and countryside locality.

The site does not lie within a Conservation Area. The proposal would not affect any building indicated on the scheduled list of buildings of historic or architectural importance. The site is indicated as being within Flood Zone 1: Low Probability of flooding.

## Location and Existing Development

The application site is located to the east side of Northney Road. Chichester Harbour lies to the east of the application red-line site. The area shown for the proposed development lies to the south and rear of the hotel complex, positioned within part of the car park at the southern end of the site. The positioning is close to and therefore more related to the positioning of the other hotel and restaurant buildings on the land.

The siting would remain free of the nearby areas of grass and shrubbery planting to the waterside coastline that lies to the south of the proposed new building area. This landscaping,



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to the outer side of the perimeter circulation road (which appears to be seldom used) would offer a level of screening to the ground floor area of the proposed structure.

### Submitted Proposal and Supporting Documents

The proposal seeks erect a two-storey free-standing flat-roof building constructed from modular building components. The building would stand alone to the south of and back of the hotel building rear on a small area currently designated as car parking to the hotel, but adjacent to the broader car parking areas behind the hotel used for visitors parking.

The building design is modern with a flat roof and a smaller first floor over the ground floor. The roof area over the ground floor is indicated to be used in part as a first-floor patio area with a glazed balcony enclosure around the roof terrace. The structure is smaller than the earlier proposal for the site which was withdrawn.

The building is shown with the ground floor glazed entrance lobby area facing the north-east and the main hotel carparking area. The entrance lobby is set back from the main front elevation projection of the building which provides a 'deep relax' area and five treatment rooms and a dispensary. To the south west corner of the building is the 'wet spa' area with small hydro-pool, sauna, and steam rooms. To the south-east side elevation is an outside vitality pool decking area accessed from the 'deep relax' and 'wet spa' areas which is enclosed by a post and rail fence and which has steps down to the surrounding ground beyond the structure. To the north-west corner, behind the entrance reception is the male and female changing rooms showers and toilets.

At first floor level is a manicure and pedicure room and the spa lounge with juice bar and kitchen. The rooms have access to the first-floor glazed balustrade outdoor terrace to the south-west elevation.

The structure incorporates large picture windows to all elevations at first floor level allowing light and aspect into the various treatment areas. The open-air areas (the ground floor decking vitality pool area, and the first-floor external walkway and terrace) all have a southerly aspect, facing on to the harbour coastline.

The indicated material treatment would have Siberian Larchwood timber cladding panels to the front entrance section (north-west) and side elevations, with stonework cladding panels together with Siberian Larchwood timber cladding to the rear (south-east). The front elevation is shown to have a water-wall feature. The flat roof building height is indicated to be 7.5m from the ground.

The location of the proposal would require the loss of and re-provision elsewhere of a small number of car parking spaces. The positioning of the structure on part of the segregated carparking area means that there is little if no loss of the existing landscape planting to the area surrounding the site. A replacement parking area for 16 cars is indicated to the east end of the existing car park.

It is noted that a Background Information document has been submitted in support of the proposal. The supporting documents have been considered alongside the planning application submission form and plans/drawings

### Applicants Approach

The applicant/applicant's agent have referred to the application proposal within its context and setting of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in the submitted documents for the proposal.

There is however no recognition made to the AONB planning policy documents relevant to the consideration of the proposal (see above in Planning Approach section). Furthermore, the applicant/applicant's agent has failed to make any reference to, or to consider the LPA Local Plan Policy specifically addressing the AONB (HBC Core Strategy Policy CS12).

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The proposal has apparently therefore been made without acknowledgement of the status of the AONB and Management Plan which would be expected from a professional planning understanding considered appropriate in this regard. [www.conservancy.co.uk](http://www.conservancy.co.uk)

## Planning Assessment

### - Policy Considerations

The statutory purpose of the AONB is to conserve and enhance the area's natural beauty. The adopted guidance requires a clear demonstration that no harm is caused to the AONB.

In general planning terms, the principle of –

1. the proposed use and activity resulting from the development
  2. the proposed physical works and finished treatment and appearance
- would require a full and detailed consideration and assessment of potential, possible, and probable impact to the character and appearance of the site and locality within the AONB.

The principle of the proposed use and activity would not be a significant concern due to the use being ancillary / complementary to the activity of the adjacent hotel on the site. The principle of the proposed physical works and appearance should be generally acceptable to the character and appearance of the surrounding environment.

### - Visual Impact within the AONB Landscape

Visually there would be a change to the appearance of the hotel site when viewed from the southern aspects, along Northney Road. Given the spatial pattern of surrounding development, the proposal would have a visually different appearance from the other closely related buildings on the wider site. The proposed structure would however not stand out visually alone or remote as did the earlier positions sought.

The indicated relatively close-coupled positioning of the spa structure with the existing hotel buildings would displace some car parking spaces. These are indicated to be relocated to the periphery of the existing car parking area to the east. Such a relocation would, it is suggested, not result in harmful development to the AONB environment.

The landscaping to the western end of the land promontory into the harbour would not be impacted by this structure. Similarly, the landscaping to the southern part of the site adjacent to the harbour coastline, to the opposite side of the site's internal access road, would also not be subject to removal or loss. These factors are improvements to the earlier (APP/19/00802 initial, first, and second amendments) plans for the positioning of the proposal on the hotel site.

### - Visual Scale / Bulk Changes / Design and Appearance within the AONB

The visual impact of the proposal within the AONB is also a factor of scale. In this proposal there is no external physical works to increase the floor area or accommodation that exists on the site. There are therefore no changes that would contribute to the bulk of the building.

The proposed structure would sit with the hotel as its backdrop when viewed from outside of the site and the harbour. The proposal would relate more with the grouping of the existing buildings on the site, with hotel and its long and windowed elevation assisting to integrate the spa structure into this setting.



The design and appearance of the proposal has no common characteristic with that of the main hotel buildings. The proposal is 7.5m in height with a flat roof, the hotel buildings vary between 8m-8.5m to ridge roof height. Architecturally this is not an issue. Whilst this may be considered to fail to link the structures together in as part of a common site design character and compatible ethos, the differences in appearance are predominantly viewed from within the site car parking area, with external views partially screened by boundary vegetation to the road network to the west and the harbour waters to the south and east.

The proposed structure would add to the visual mass and bulk of the buildings occupying the hotel site, forming a part of, albeit detached, the grouping of buildings in this area of the wider site. This would have little impact on the overall character and appearance of the rural harbourside landscape of the area within the designated countryside, given the hotel building backdrop that would be viewed from the harbour waterside.

#### - Wildlife and Biodiversity

The proposal seeks a new free-standing structure on an area of the existing hotel carpark. The proposal would generate on-site leisure activity for hotel patrons and be an end destination for local residents who take membership of the spa. In this regard the proposal would be unlikely to increase recreational activity in the locality beyond the site or add to disturbance of wildlife areas.

The visual impact of the structure and its use, under internal and external lighting, during the darker hours of its operation would have a potential impact on local wildlife. It is strongly advised that suitable and effective planning conditions are necessary to control and limit the lighting impact from the internal and external areas of the structure. Subject to these controls, the proposal would not obviously impact on existing wildlife habitats and would not therefore be viewed as harmful to the wildlife or biodiversity of the site.

#### - Possible Alternative Use

The proposal could have some alternative uses but being closely related to the hotel, other uses beyond this tourism activity would be unlikely for this rear of hotel site.

#### - Summary Conclusion

The proposal would have a localised impact on the character and appearance of the immediate surrounds. The proposal would have a visual impact on the AONB, but this is minimal.

Given its setting, and in particular the location closer to the existing buildings on the site and set back from on the edge of the harbour, the proposal is considered to result in a structure that is noticeable in architectural terms, but not so prominent so as to be detrimental to the character or the appearance of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The control of lighting associated with the operation of the spa facility would need to be restrained and proportional to the desire to maintain the character and ambiance of the AONB. The proposal is therefore considered to have a generally tolerable impact and effect on the AONB in terms of landscape character and in relation to wildlife conservation and protection.

#### Other Comment

The planning application will be considered by the LPA in terms of other aspects applicable to the planning merits of the proposal, such as any overlooking impact to neighbouring property and gardens, any perceived loss of privacy, any equated loss of light and cause of shadowing, noise generation and disturbance, traffic generation and on-site parking provision, and in terms of overall good building design and land-use neighbourliness.

A copy of this planning assessment report is attached to the consultation comment response to the LPA for information and for open transparency public view.

# Chichester Harbour Conservancy

Site viewed 14-07-2020    LPA request reply 16 July 2020    Comment to LPA 14 July 2020  
LPA Planning Case Officer: Tina Pickup  
Chichester Harbour AONB: David Rothery – Principal Planning Officer    [www.conservancy.co.uk](http://www.conservancy.co.uk)

This comment and recommendation is made having regard to the Policy framework:

- Chichester Harbour AONB **Landscape Character Assessment** (CBA update 2019)
- Chichester Harbour **Management Plan** (2019-2024)
- Chichester Harbour **AONB Planning Principles** (adopted 17.10.16 and Management Plan version April 2019)
- Chichester Harbour **AONB Joint Supplementary Planning Document** SPD (2017)
- National Planning Policy Framework (Revised 2018)
- National Planning Practice Guidance (2014)
- Havant Borough Local Plan (2011/2014)
- Havant Borough Design Guide (2011)

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**One of the UK's National Landscapes**



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