

CHICHESTER HARBOUR
AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY
PLANNING ASSESSMENT REPORT

CHC AONB Unit Fully Delegated Officer Decision

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The Langstone Hotel, Northney Road, Hayling Island, Hampshire

Planning Application : APP/19/00802 REVISED / AMENDED PLANS 29-10-2019

Proposal for erection of modular clad building for health and wellness activities

Chichester Harbour AONB Recommendation – **OBJECTION**

The proposal is opposed on the following grounds -

1. SITING AND LOCATION

The proposal introducing a structure with little sympathetic treatment to the prevailing open character of the harbour waterside in this location would compromise the Special Qualities of the AONB (particularly the character of the picturesque harbourside settlements and the unspoilt character and unobtrusive beauty of the AONB) that exists along this inlet, the Emsworth Channel Head and the North Hayling Island coastal edge. The unsympathetic and remote positioning of the proposal at the rear of the hotel carpark therefore fails to conserve or enhance the special qualities of the AONB, contrary to AONB Chichester Harbour Management Plan (2019-2024) Policy LS1: Conserving and Enhancing the Landscape

2. DESIGN IMPACT

The proposed structures visual design, with large, clear, picture windows, ground floor open areas (pool and sauna), and first floor and roof top glazed balcony areas, would impose a new structure with significant light intrusion and external activity areas on the Emsworth Channel Head harbour coastline. Such glazing and open use features would add to the visual intrusion into the generally open landscape character of this part of the harbour and North Hayling Island coastal edge, thereby failing to actively conserve or enhance the natural environment, given that the application site abuts the internationally important Ramsar site, Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC), as well as the nationally important Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and is within the SSSI Impact Risk Zone, contrary to AONB Chichester Harbour Management Plan (2019-2024) Policy 2: Development Management

3. HABITAT IMPACT

The proposal would generate additional traffic journeys in addition to those staying at the hotel and create additional disturbance along the North Hayling Island coastal edge of Chichester Harbour AONB consequential disturbance and human intrusion into this natural environment, from internal and external lighting illumination from the large picture windows and the roof top terrace up to 10.30pm at night all year round, therefore it fails to conserve or enhance the habitats and species which are favourable to the special qualities of the AONB, and in particular, the application does not conserve and enhance the landscape or wildlife of the AONB, contrary to AONB Chichester Harbour Management Plan (2019-2024) Policy 3: Diversity of Habitats

4. LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

The proposal is considered to be detrimental to the areas landscape character designation which is considered to be very sensitive to change along the Emsworth Channel Head marine environment and the North Hayling Island coastal edge, which is particularly sensitive to change, as noted in the Landscape Character areas C2 and G1 of the Chichester Harbour AONB Landscape Character Assessment (April 2019), development should avoid the loss of trees and hedges and respond to its landscape setting, rather than involve the potential



removal and loss of screening landscape (Eucalyptus and Cherry trees) as is likely from the revised siting and operational use of this proposal.

Process -

This is a revised submission for the current application APP/19/00802. Additional information to the initial submission was submitted to the LPA on 23 September 2019 on which The Conservancy made comment on 29 October 2019 raising an objection on four grounds. This current revised submission repositions the proposed structure within the site to address flood risk issues and makes consequential alterations to the design. The repositioning does not address the Conservancy's concerns of impact to and within the AONB.

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 (S85 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.

- 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).

- Management Plan

The Chichester Harbour Management Plan (2019-2024 Third Review) 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), and Policy 2 (Development Management).

- 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, and PP03: Replacement Dwellings and Domestic Householder Extensions, are applicable to this proposal.

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.

- Joint Chichester Harbour AONB SPD

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

The Joint Chichester Harbour AONB Supplementary Planning Document (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. 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/18/01112: Proposal Erection of a single-storey front extension to restaurant area; reposition frontage wall; and provide front entrance to a bar area. Application **approved by the LPA** on 14 December 2018. 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.

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 close to the small built-up settlement area of Northney within the surrounding rural countryside in the AONB. The adjacent designated areas include: RAMSAR, SAC, SINC, SPA, SSSI. The site lies alongside and is close to the coastline within Chichester Harbour and is clearly seen from the water areas. The Emsworth Channel Head coastline lies to the north as Swear Deep, and to the east and south.

Planning Assessment –

Location

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 rear of the hotel complex, at the back of the car park and unrelated to the positioning of the other hotel and restaurant buildings on the land. The site is currently occupied by an area of grass and shrubbery planting to the waterside coastline which lies both to the north and to the south of the proposed new building area.

Proposal

The proposal seeks erect a two-storey free-standing building constructed from modular building components. The building would stand alone to the back of the rear car parking area to the hotel, but adjacent to the harbour coastline to both the north and the rear, with a small landscaped promontory into the harbour waters to the east.

The building design is modern with a flat roof and cubic appearance. The indicated material treatment would have a vertical emphasis with stonework panels to the front entrance section and timber cladding panels to the side wings and side elevations. Clarity on the rear elevation external material treatment is unfortunately unclear from the submitted drawings, especially as this elevation would face eastwards onto the land promontory into the harbour.

The building is shown with large picture windows to the ground floor entrance lobby area (west facing to the carpark and hotel), to the northern side as part of the building backdrop to the open pool area, and to the southern side building backdrop to the open sauna terrace area. At first floor level there are picture windows to the front projection, to both side wings, north and south to the open coastline, and to the north-western corner, again facing the



harbour waterline. In addition, there is a first-floor terrace area to the east side of the northern wing and a second-floor large roof terrace to the rear half of the building, with a glazed balcony enclosure and some potted planting features.

The elevation drawings also infer a decked area at ground floor to either side of the entrance, but this is not shown on the floor plans. The extent of the developed site would therefore be likely to exceed the building structure as shown on the plans.

Assessment

The location of the proposal would likely involve the removal of the existing landscape planting to the western end of the land promontory into the harbour, to enable the building structure to be sited and be maintained. The additional information submitted on 23 Sept 2019 fails to secure the landscaping which would be impacted through the installation (and likely on-going maintenance of the external fabric) of the building.

The large areas of picture windows and the two roof terraces (at first and second floor levels), the latter with a glazed balcony enclosure, would have a obvious and intrusive impact on the sider surrounds, not only from the use and activity, but also from internal room lighting and external light sources (wall mounted to the outside of the building) which would illuminate the structure during dark evenings and early mornings.

Given the spatial pattern of surrounding development, the proposal stands out visually alone to the east of the wider site. The proposed structure pays little regard to the existing building grouping to the west side of the hotel site.

Furthermore, the design and appearance of the proposal has no common characteristic with that of the main hotel buildings, which, architecturally not a bad thing, but therefore fails to link the structures together in as part of a common site design character and compatible ethos. The proposal is therefore a disparate building on the land, with a remote siting that fails to reflect the spatial setting and the grain of the on-site built form.

Summary Conclusion

The proposed structure would significantly add to the visual mass and bulk of the buildings occupying the hotel site. This would have an impact on the overall character and appearance of the rural harbourside landscape of the area within the designated countryside, given the considerable waterside visual presence it would have. The proposal is not complementary to the rural landscape within this part of the AONB.

Given its setting, and in particular the location on the edge of the harbour, the proposal is considered to result in a structure that is unduly prominent so as to be detrimental to the character or the appearance of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The proposal is therefore likely to have a significant impact and effect on the AONB in terms of character and in relation to wildlife.

Other Comment –

Considering the relationship of the hotel site to this proposed spa structure's revised location, it is possible to position this proposed building in a less intrusive location within the hotel grounds.

A closer positioning to the hotel could enable a linked covered access for hotel guests which would be preferable during inclement weather and during late evenings when a route through a dark unlit carpark would not be welcoming. Furthermore, a closer positioning to the hotel would assist the staff who it is claimed would work both at the spa and within the hotels existing leisure areas.

A revised and closer coupled positioning on site would reduce the intrusive stand-apart impact of the proposed spa structure as it would be read as part of the existing group of buildings on the site.

Chichester Harbour Conservancy

It is acknowledged that such close-coupled positioning would likely displace some car parking spaces which would have to be relocated elsewhere to the periphery of the existing car parking area. Such a relocation would, it is suggested, result in a less harmful development to the AONB environment than the current, albeit itself a revised positioned proposal.

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.

Site visited 11-11-2019 LPA request reply 19-11-2019 Comment to LPA 12-11-2019
LPA Planning Case Officer : Tina Pickup
Chichester Harbour AONB : David Rothery – Principal Planning Officer

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

- CHMP** – new Chichester Harbour Management Plan (2019-2024)
- CHAONBPP's** Chichester Harbour AONB Planning Principles (adopted 17.10.16 and management plan revised version 28.01.2019)
- SPG/SPD** – Chichester Harbour AONB Joint SPD (2017)
Havant Borough Design Guide (2011)
- HBLP** – Havant Borough Local Plan (2011/2014)
- HBLPA** – Havant Borough Local Plan Allocations DPD (December 2013)
- NPPF** – National Planning Policy Framework (Revised 2018)
- NPPG** – National Planning Practice Guidance (2014)

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