
Site Address:	St Peters Square, Emsworth		
Proposal:	Erection of 7No. signs at 4 locations, (revised details reduced to A4 size each).		
Application No:	APP/17/00412	Expiry Date:	23/06/2017
Applicant:	Mr Alistair Gibson Emsworth Business Association		
Agent:		Case Officer:	Tina Pickup
Ward:	Emsworth		

Recommendation: **GRANT ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT**

1 Site Description

The application relates to the erection of signs around St Peters Square, Emsworth. They would be mounted on various lighting columns in the vicinity of the Square. The site lies within Emsworth Conservation Area and Chichester Harbour AONB. The existing street furniture reflects this historical setting and is generally black wrought iron. The square itself includes an original bus shelter, several benches, tiered planters and bollards round its perimeter.

2 Planning History

None relevant

3 Proposal

Erection of 7No. signs at 4 locations, (revised details reduced to A4 size each).

As originally submitted, the signs were to be 49.5cm x 32.1cm with 6 of them mounted on lighting columns - 2 on the western pavement opposite the Square; 2 on the square itself - one at the southern tip and one to the east; and 2 on the south-eastern pavement opposite the Square.

During the course of determining the application the size of the signs has been reduced to A4 size ie 21cm x 29.7cm and the number of signs changed to 7 at just 4 locations by mounting them back-to-back at 3 sites (1 on the western pavement opposite; one on the Square at the eastern position; and one on the eastern pavement) with one additional single sign on the western pavement.

The signs would be metal with a matt finish and are non-illuminated. They would be erected at a height of 1.69m above ground level.

4 Policy Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework
Havant Borough Council Borough Design Guide SPD December 2011
Chichester Harbour AONB SPD, July 2017

Havant Borough Local Plan (Core Strategy) March 2011

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| CS11 | (Protecting and Enhancing the Special Environment and Heritage of Havant Borough) |
| CS12 | (Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)) |
| CS16 | (High Quality Design) |

Havant Borough Local Plan (Allocations) July 2014

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| AL1 | (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development) |
| DM21 | (Shopfronts, Signs, Security Shutters and Advertisements) |

Listed Building Grade: Not applicable.

Conservation Area: Emsworth

5 Statutory and Non Statutory Consultations

Chichester Harbour Conservancy

Whilst we are supportive of the wish of the Emsworth Business Association to promote local business within Emsworth and we would support the provision of signage which is sympathetic to the Conservation Area and AONB within which the site is situated; unfortunately we feel that the 6 proposed signs are too large, are too brightly coloured, and that placing 6 of them in such a small area is excessive and would lead to clutter and visual harm, thereby failing to preserve or enhance the Conservation Area and the AONB, contrary to Local Plan Policies CS11 and CS12.

We note that there is a sympathetic black finger-post sign guiding people to local amenities which is situated on St Peter's Square, and we consider that a design more along these lines would be more appropriate, with a reduced number of smaller signs (2 or 3 within the area of St Peters Square located in strategic positions would seem sufficient).

Given the above, the Local Planning Authority is advised that the Conservancy recommends refusal of this application. We would however encourage the applicant to liaise with the Conservancy and the Borough Council to produce a design more sensitive to its location within Emsworth Conservation Area and Chichester Harbour AONB.

Conservation Officer, Development Control

On original submission - No Objection

Six signs are to be located on lampposts around St Peters Square, Emsworth which is located within the Conservation Area. The signs advertise that free Wi-fi is available in the area.

The proposed signs are relatively small and will appear largely inconspicuous in the area. As such I consider that the signs will preserve the character of the Conservation Area in accordance with Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Highways Engineer, Development Engineer

Initial response

The attachment of any sign to a lamppost requires the permission of the Highway Authority.

In general, street lighting columns, whether used for permanent or temporary fixtures, should comply with the guidelines indicated in DTLR Memorandum BD 94. This means that the erection of sign plates of greater than 0.3 square metres in area is not permitted. Columns must not be used as the second leg of a sign requiring a second post, as experience has shown that this has caused significant problems with existing columns.

Street lighting columns shall not be used as supports for advertising signs of any kind, except where recognised organisations (ie Automobile Association or Royal Automobile Club) have been granted permission by the Highway Authority, and when fixed such signs should not obscure the unit maintenance number.

This approval must be obtained in order for the application to be dealt with

Case Officer Note - subsequently confirmed by HCC Highways that as the signs are not DfT approved traffic signs, nor are they temporary banners, there is no procedure in place for Hampshire County Council's highway unit or Highway Operation Centre to permit or licence them; instead these signs could be permitted using the same arrangements for allowing neighbourhood watch signs, which falls under the responsibility of Havant Borough Council.

Updated response: The applicant has the required permissions and the Highway Authority has therefore no adverse comment to the application

6 **Community Involvement**

This application was publicised in accordance with the Council's Code of Practice for Publicity of Planning Applications approved at minute 207/6/92 (as amended), as a result of which the following publicity was undertaken:

Number of neighbour notification letters sent: 18

Number of site notices: 2

Statutory advertisement: 30/06/2017

Number of representations received: 1

Comment	Officer Comment
On Original Plans:	
<p>I object to: The signs are too large, and far too many in such a small area. The area is also an 'Area of Natural Beauty' and a conservation area.</p> <p>Not long ago, a Conservative leaflet was distributed around Emsworth stating that the area in the town was an ANOB and a Conservation area, and the council were starting a 'Zero Tolerance' campaign to fine people £70 if they dropped litter or cigarette ends. Yet here we have an application from the EBA who profess to have the interests of the town at heart to plaster the town with large and glary advertising boards.</p> <p>The council's conservation officer quotes S72 of the relevant</p>	<p>Amended proposal is considered to address these concerns - see Section 7 below</p>

<p>conservation Act for his reasons for supporting the application.</p> <p>S72 (1) (2) states that 'Special consideration should be given to the desirability of preserving the character or appearance of that area'. Do the council not want to do that?</p> <p>The officer also states that the signs are 'relatively small' and 'inconspicuous'. If this was so, then what is the point of putting them up? 300mm x 500mm is neither 'small' nor 'inconspicuous'.</p> <p>They have been designed to stand out.</p> <p>A nearby road sign - White arrow on a blue background - is 280mm x 430mm. A Planning notice on a lamp post is 210mm x 300mm. They are neither small nor inconspicuous as they would not do the job they are required to do.</p> <p>It appears that Chichester Harbour Conservancy are the only people with the interest of the town at heart.</p> <p>If the EBA wishes to advertise free Wi-Fi in Emsworth, then I suggest they use the official council noticeboards on the square, and in North Street, and also shop windows as many other local people do.</p> <p>After all, they do say that they have the support of the local businesses.</p>	
<p>On Amended Plans:</p>	
<p>This is an addendum to my previous comment on the above planning application.</p> <p>Altering the size and increasing the quantity of the planned notices does not alter the facts highlighted in my previous comments. Everything still stands.</p> <p>I would like to add the following comments:</p> <p>I was under the impression that the relevant Advertising Regulations precludes businesses from advertising anywhere other than in their own shop windows, and only their own products that they sell.</p> <p>The Emsworth Business Association is</p>	<p>As above</p> <p>The Advertisement Regulations set out what advertisements can be displayed without the Council's approval under its 'deemed consent' provisions - because the proposal exceeds the criteria set out in the Regulations then this application is necessary for consideration. That said, the</p>

an organisation that represents the businesses of Emsworth. This free Wi-Fi is from a business. The router is on business premises. It could not be clearer.

The Public Noticeboard on the Square has its use regulated by the council. One of the main rules is that businesses cannot advertise in the board or place business cards.

I would like to remind the council that the lamp posts proposed to hang these signs on were specially designed to enhance the town because it is in a 'conservation' area.

Yet this business organisation proposes to plant glary posters on them, and our council 'conservation' officer has no objections.

I would like to add that if the planning officer and the conservation officer would like to step foot in Emsworth in the week prior to the 3rd Saturday in the month, they would see the said lamp posts adorned with yellow plastic posters advertising the forthcoming farmers market hosted by the EBA (all illegal). Two of those lamp posts would also have large council signs restricting traffic for the said Saturday.

These proposed new signs if permitted would add to the overloaded visual affect, causing drivers to miss important road signs which are ALSO on these lamp posts.

I notice that the new proposed signs are now carrying the Havant Borough Council Logo. Are the council subsidising this Wi-Fi.? It gives that impression. They are also advertising a business.

As stated previously I object to these posters.

Photographs also sent

fact that the proposal does not fall within the 'deemed consent' provisions does not render it automatically unacceptable - instead the application must be assessed in terms of its impact upon amenity and public safety.

The Development Engineer has not objected to the proposal.

7 Planning Considerations

7.1 Applications for the display of advertisements can only be considered in the interests of amenity and public safety, having regard to the development plan and any material considerations. It is also noteworthy that the actual content and colour of the sign is not a material consideration. Case Law notes that the actual content of the display of a sign is not a relevant consideration and therefore objections may not be made to the content of an advertisement, its actual wording, message or graphic design.

7.2 The application is submitted by Emsworth Business Association and it is understood that their organisation has installed a Wi-Fi router onto the outside of the butchers at 21 St Peters Square to provide free Wi-Fi for businesses, visitors and residents within a certain range. The signs are to alert visitors to the free WiFi provision. The appropriate consent to display the signs on SSE lamp posts has been sought and granted by SSE.

(i) Impact on Amenity

7.3 The site does lie within a sensitive location being both a Conservation Area and the Chichester Harbour AONB. Hence the effect the signs would have, both individually and cumulatively, on the visual appearance and character of the area insofar as affecting the wider amenity of the area is a relevant consideration. As originally submitted the signs were considered to be overlarge with too many in such a small area which would result in visual prominence and clutter being detrimental to the visual harmony of Emsworth Square.

7.4 Accordingly the size of the signs has been significantly reduced to the equivalent of an A4 piece of paper. The siting of the signs has also been amended with less lamp posts ie sites, being used. The post at the southern tip of the Square (No 10 on the plan) has been omitted altogether as an existing blue directional road sign would conflict. Instead of 2 lamp posts on the south-eastern pavement opposite the Square, only 1 lamp post is to be used, but there would be 2 signs erected on it, back to back. This would enable views of it from both directions but limit the clutter. Similarly only one post in the eastern corner of the Square is now proposed, with 2 back-to-back signs. On the western pavement facing the Square the two posts are still proposed, the northern one with back to back signs, and the southern one with just one facing the square. Overall, with only 4 lamp posts now being used, this reduces the scatter effect and visual clutter of the proposed signs. Combined with the reduction in size, the amended scheme is now considered to be more sympathetic to the historic town centre location, which itself is characterised by shop signage, directional traffic signs, finer posts and a Council noticeboard.

7.5 Because the site lies within the Conservation Area then Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires planning authorities, when considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a Conservation Area, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of that area. The NPPF sets out, in paragraph 17, the 12 core planning principles that local planning authorities should consider in making planning decisions. One of these core principles relates directly to conserving heritage assets, as follows "Planning should conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations;". It is noteworthy that this application is to mount small signs on lamp posts which by their nature are removable and would do no permanent damage or harm the heritage asset for the

long term. The process to mount the signs is reversible, and notwithstanding this the Conservation Officer has raised no objection to the application. It is therefore considered that the application would preserve the character of the area.

- 7.6 The objector notes that on a monthly basis the town centre hosts a farmers market and temporary signage is erected which adds to the visual clutter. This is not a matter for this application.

(ii) Impact on Public Safety

- 7.7 With respect to public safety the original sign 10 was considered to conflict with a road sign and could have resulted in a distraction to drivers and as such was unacceptable - this lamp post is no longer being used, omitting the highway safety risk. The other signs locations are not considered to conflict with road safety and are not illuminated. The Development Engineer has raised no objections to their display.

8 Conclusion

Overall the amended proposal is considered to satisfactorily comply with Policy DM21 which relates to adverts - the reduced sizing is considered appropriate in the context of the scale of the predominately two storey urban town centre setting, and the concentration of 2 signs per lamp post reduces any risk of overall clutter on the visual appearance of the streetscene. The proposal is considered to preserve the character of the Conservation Area and does not raise any issues of public safety. Accordingly the proposal is recommended for advertisement consent.

9 **RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Head of Planning be authorised to **GRANT ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT** for application APP/17/00412 subject to the following conditions:

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
Amended Location Plan dated 22nd June 2017 on LPA list of documents
Amended Signage details measuring 210mm x 297mm dated 27 June 2017 on LPA list of documents
Reason: - To ensure provision of a satisfactory development.