

42a Buckingham Palace Road
London SW1W 0RE
Telephone: 0300 123 0764
Fax: 0300 123 0765
Email: info@warmemorials.org

Patron: HRH The Duchess of Cornwall
Chairman: Peter McCormick OBE
Registered Charity No: 1062255
Website: www.warmemorials.org



War Memorials Trust

Planning Development
Havant Borough Council
Public Service Plaza
Civic Centre Road, Havant
Hampshire
PO9 2AX

Our ref: WM7328
Your ref: APP/15/01241

Telephone: 020 7233 7356
Email: helen@warmemorials.org

26 November 2015

Dear Sir/Madam

Thank you for allowing War Memorials Trust (WMT) the opportunity to provide comment on this Listed Building Consent application.

WMT is not a statutory consultee but the Trust does possess experience and expertise relating to the conservation and repair of war memorials.

In response to the application as currently presented, and having also considered the documents accompanying this application, in addition to the other representations (as of the date of this letter), WMT wish to make the following points:

The war memorial is Grade II listed, set in proximity to the Grade II* listed St Faith's Church, both of which are within the St Faith's Conservation Area. This is a significant heritage context. The listed status of the memorial requires that any proposal that may affect the architectural and historic significance of the memorial must merit careful consideration against guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and relevant regional and local policy.

The design of the war memorial is described in the listing description as 'elegant, executed in good quality materials'. The memorial has reasonably accommodated the later intervention of plaques marking the lives lost during World War II. However, the addition of further plaques (ie. the already existing generic plaque to mark lives lost in conflict since World War II, plus the plaque proposed by this application) does and will compromise that 'elegant design'.

However, should the principle of the addition of another plaque listing names be accepted by the Havant community, WMT would wish to make the following comments:

Consultee feedback suggests that there remains considerable research to be undertaken into the names proposed to be added. WMT would strongly advise that the opportunity to ensure the research is as robust as possible is taken. WMT is unclear how much public consultation has been undertaken but would further advise that it would be sensible to provide a further reasonable consultation opportunity. The drawings provided with the application are inadequate. Some of them are extremely faint. Based on these drawings, it is very difficult to draw a conclusion about how the new plaque will be accommodated and if the new plaques echo the

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design and letting type used for the other plaques. It would be very helpful if a set of high quality photographs were included with the application.

A clear method statement should be produced about how the plaque will be added and how this will not cause harm to the existing fabric of the memorial. Adding new elements to historic fabric can accelerate the rate of decay of the latter as the chemical compositions will be very different. In this vein, careful consideration should also be given the type and quality of the fittings proposed. As detailed in the application, the generic plaque fixings have suffered from rusting.

Conclusion

WMT is sure that all those who have been involved in the project to date are keenly aware of the important responsibility that any custodian of a war memorial has. WMT would also stress that this custodianship is temporary and therefore wherever possible it is the duty of a custodian to protect the original design intentions of those who erected the memorial and the community who paid for it by public subscription.

WMT understands and supports the need of communities to continue to commemorate those who lose their lives in conflict. However existing memorials cannot always sympathetically accommodate the addition of new elements (such as plaques) without it causing harm to the architectural and historic integrity of the memorial. A suggestion contained in one of the representations is the opportunity to commemorate lives lost in conflict since World War II at an alternative site – the Gazebo Garden, East Street. Has any serious consideration been given to this (or any other site) as a feasible option rather than attempting to overload the existing war memorial? We can appreciate the desire to have all commemorative activity focused on one site, but this should not be at the cost of undermining the integrity of the memorial. Given this plaque is marking names of lives lost in conflicts after World War II (currently eight names), it is sadly as possibility that more names will come forward in the future – how would those names be accommodated?

WMT feel there is keen local interest in the war memorial and there is a positive opportunity to engage that interest and knowledge to explore how the town of Havant commemorates those who have lost their lives in conflict since World War II. As such, WMT would advise that the application in its current form is not approved.

WMT would be happy to provide further advice should proposals develop.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H Bowman', with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Miss Helen Bowman
Conservation Officer