

Our Ref: EB/B0219/14
PP ref: PP-03860926

18 December 2014

Development Management
Havant Borough Council
Public Service Plaza
Civic Centre Road
Havant
PO9 2AX

Dear Sir/Madam,

Royal Oak, Langstone High Street, Havant, Hampshire,

I have today submitted an application via Planning Portal (PP Ref: PP-03860926) for the installation of decking and other improvements to the beer garden at rear of The Royal Oak public house.

I enclose a cheque for £195 to cover the fee for this application, for which a receipt would be appreciated in due course. In addition to this covering/supporting letter (which incorporates a Flood Risk Assessment and a Heritage Impact Assessment) the application is supported by the following:

- Drawing 14:126/05 (Rev:A) Location Plan and Block Plan
- Drawing 14:126/04 Existing Garden Plan
- Drawing 14:126/03 Proposed Garden Plan
- Arboricultural Information (Ref: SW.AMS.259.14)

This letter is written in support of our application, made on behalf of Green King PLC, for the installation of decking and other improvements to the beer garden at rear of The Royal Oak public house. As supported by the NPPF, the level of detail submitted in this application is in proportion to the small scale and minor nature of the proposals.

The Royal Oak public house fronts the pedestrian only eastern extremity of the High Street, overlooking a stretch of Chichester harbour and Hayling Island beyond. It is a two storey, grade II listed building with a patio, beer garden and some outbuildings at the rear.

The Royal Oak's beer garden is a popular feature. Unfortunately, the resulting foot-traffic moving around the garden has resulted in grass areas being worn down to bare soil, as shown in Photograph 1. Given the continuing nature of the use of the garden, the grass/lawn will not recover and erosion of the soil will continue.

It has therefore been decided to carry out improvements to the beer garden, as shown on the Proposed Garden Plan. This includes:

- Installation of a new raised decking area, covered by four "Jumbrella" shades with concrete footing;

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- Removal of the existing bin store in the south east corner of the garden to be replaced with an area of brick paving and new seating;
- Erection of a new bin store to the west, nearer to the kitchen;
- Installation of a ramp to improve access to the existing paved seating area; and
- Installation of new planters to west and south of the existing paved seating area.



Photograph 1: The Royal Oak's beer garden

The new bin store will be approximately 3.6 by 3.2 metres, with a concrete base and 2m high close boarded fencing. Existing fencing will also be re-stained and repaired where necessary.

The Havant Borough Local Plan (Core Strategy) was adopted in March 2011 (HBLP). Policy CS5 supports small scale recreational opportunities for tourists. The Royal Oak should be regarded as such an opportunity due to the attractions of its location and the customers it serves.

HBLP shows the site to be within the Langstone Conservation Area and the Chichester Harbour AONB and therefore Policies CS11 and CS12 apply. The proposed changes are minor and visually contained within the beer garden. There are mature trees in the garden which make a contribution to the visual containment of the site and to the character of the wider area. These trees will be retained and protected as detailed in the Arboricultural Information accompanying this application. Therefore, the proposals will not have any adverse impact on the site's contribution to the Conservation Area or the AONB and the improved facilities for tourists will be beneficial.

HBLP Policy DM2 protects existing community facilities (including public houses) while DM3 protects existing tourism sites. The application proposal involves no loss of, or to, the pub. However, this application is important to the continuance of the pub in what remain challenging times for the hospitality industry.

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Heritage Impact Assessment

The application site is in the garden of a listed building and within a conservation area. Some brief consideration is therefore given to the likely heritage impact of this application.

The Royal Oak's listing entry (number 0191597) states that the building is "Included for group value". The pub, grouped with its neighbours (similarly painted white) makes an important contribution to the High Street and harbour frontage (see Photograph 2), being visible from the A203, Langstone Road and the bridge to Hayling Island.



Photograph 2: The Royal Oak frontage.

There are trees and shrubs as well as outbuildings in the pub garden which obstruct wider views of the rear of the pub. The rear of the pub and the beer garden make no meaningful contribution to any "group value" or to the Conservation Area.

The proposal does not involve any change to the listed building itself, only to its setting. The proposal will only be materially visible from within the application site. The area is currently used as a patio/beer garden and will retain that look and feel while being visually improved by the new planters and the improvements addressing the areas of worn grass/bare soil.

It can therefore be concluded that the proposals will cause no harm, and indeed no adverse impact of any kind to the heritage value of this building and wider area. Indeed, there will be a positive benefit in terms of maintaining the viable use of the building and improving the public's ability to enjoy the area.

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Flood Risk Assessment

The site is in Flood Zone 3 as it is at risk of flooding from the sea, so some consideration must be given to flood risk and the requirements of HBLP Policy CS15. The sequential test is not relevant as this not new development where an alternative location could be given consideration. Nor do the proposals involve a new use that would be more vulnerable to flooding.

As the risk is from sea flooding, the permeability of the surface is of little import, however, it can be noted that the natural surface under the decking will remain unchanged and so the proposals will not have a significant impact on surface water run-off rates from the site. The proposals do not involve any construction that would affect the flood water storage capacity of the site.

The proposals will have no adverse impact on the risk of flooding, either within the site or elsewhere. The applicant therefore believes that flood risk is not a reason to reject this application and that no further consideration of flooding is required.

The proposal is in accordance with policy and the NPPF's presumption in favour of sustainable development.

In conclusion, granting this planning permission would directly support the Royal Oak and its contribution to the local tourist economy. It is therefore commended to the Council.

I look forward to receiving confirmation that this application has been validated and to an early opportunity to discuss the proposals with the Planning Officer. If you have any queries or require any further information at this stage, please do not hesitate to contact me by telephone or email.

Yours faithfully

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