
Site Address:	26-30 London Road, Cowplain, Waterloooville, PO8 8DL		
Proposal:	Display of 1No. LED screen display board.		
Application No:	APP/14/00218	Expiry Date:	29/04/2014
Applicant:	Mr V Patel	Team:	Team 2
Agent:		Case Officer:	Tina Pickup
Ward:	Cowplain		

Recommendation: **REFUSE ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT**

1 Site Description

The application site relates to the relatively new two/three storey 'medical centre complex' located on the east side of the London Road in Cowplain, and specifically to the pharmacy which is on the ground floor in the south-west corner of the complex. The centre is accessed by vehicles off Padnell Road and Padnell Avenue but there is a footpath link to the main London Road. The building is set back from the London Road by some 8m, is set at a slightly lower level and there are significant trees within the highway verge which do partly screen the site. The site is situated immediately adjacent the traffic lighted junction on London Road with Padnell Road.

The entrance to the pharmacy is angled across the corner of the building and set back beneath the first floor corner above. A supporting pillar is therefore in front of the entrance to the shop. The 'shop window' is located on the west side, facing the London Road.

There are already numerous signs on this building. The actual pharmacy has individually applied non-illuminated letters stating 'PHARMACY' and the pharmacy symbol on both the west and south elevation of the corner projection in front of the recessed front door. Furthermore the shop window in the west elevation is not used for the display of goods but rather has a large advert for the pharmacy applied to the window area. At the time of the site visit (14/3/14) there are also 3 large, non-illuminated sign boards applied at first floor level on the west elevation: one advertises the Pharmacy; one Cowplain Family Practice; and one Private Healthcare Centre. Due to their size and location above the bottom of the first floor window they are likely to fail the criteria for deemed consent and therefore be unauthorised. The south elevation also has two non-illuminated board signs at ground floor level.

In addition there is a freestanding double-sided post sign within the grass verge adjacent the pavement that advertises the Cowplain Centre with boards for its sponsors: Healthspace South and Cowplain Family Practice.

The temporary banner signs shown in the submitted photos were removed from the site at the time of the site visit.

2 Planning History

08/68275/002 - Demolition of existing houses and GP surgery and construction of new GP/Pharmacy/Health premises including new access, car park, servicing and landscape, permission granted 12/12/2008.

12/00567 - Display of 1No. double sided non illuminated entrance sign - Adv Consent
17/8/12

3 Proposal

The proposal involves the addition of an internally illuminated 'LED screen display' board measuring 4.1m long x 0.58m deep, having a thickness of 40mm. The screen board would be located above the existing individual letters PHARMACY on the brick elevation of the west elevation, below the first floor window above - the underside of the sign would have a height of 3.4m. It would be a full colour LED board displaying varying messages such as 'Open till late/Late night pharmacy open 24 hours/NHS repeat prescription dispensing/' etc. The display would therefore be a constantly moving display of messages.

4 Policy Considerations

National Policies

NPPF

Planning Practice Guidance on Advertisements, 6/3/2014

Core Strategies 2011 forming part of the HBLDF

CS16 (High Quality Design)

DM10 (Pollution)

Havant Borough Local Plan (Allocations) Publication Plan, October 2013

Policy DM21 - Shopfronts, Signs, Security Shutters and Advertisements

Listed Building Grade: Not applicable.

Conservation Area: Not applicable.

5 Statutory and Non Statutory Consultations

Development Engineer - Recommend refusal as contrary to advice contained in the Planning Practice Guidance to NPPF, para 068 which discusses the main types of advertisement that would cause danger to road users.

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: 22

Number of site notices: At least one site notice exists - check the number.

Statutory advertisement: Not applicable.

Number of representations received: 1

Summary: Object because 1. distraction to traffic; 2. signage incorrect - pharmacy not open 24hrs; 3. already significant signage this addition is excessive; 4. LED screen not in keeping with area; sign not needed nor desirable.

Comment: These issues are discussed below:

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:

- (i) Amenity
- (ii) Public Safety

(i) Amenity

7.2 The site is located in a mixed area comprising shops, other businesses and residential properties. The new healthcare centre already has excessive signage which appears to have been added in a piecemeal fashion. The freestanding double-posted sign on the verge already provides a more comprehensive signage close to the London Road highway that provides an appropriate 'tidy' advert that suitable advises and attracts passers by of the services provided. The addition of the proposed screen board, above the existing fascia sign would represent unnecessary visual clutter. The sign would dominate the underside of the first floor window area and represent the fourth sign at this level on the west elevation. This would be detrimental to both the visual appearance of the building itself and represent additional signage of inappropriate scale and siting. This is therefore contrary to policy DM21 of the Havant Borough Local Plan (Allocations) Plan, October 2013.

7.3 The area is characterised by a local community mixed businesses and residential properties. It is considered that the introduction of a moving or flashing LED sign is inappropriate in such an area and would be harmful to the amenity of this local community. Such adverts are more appropriate to commercial centres in major cities.

(ii) Public Safety

7.4 The new Planning Practice Guidance, 2014, notes at para 67 that "All advertisements are intended to attract attention but proposed advertisements at points where drivers need to take more care are more likely to affect public safety. For example, at junctions, roundabouts, pedestrian crossings...." etc. This proposed sign is adjacent a busy traffic lighted junction that also provides a pedestrian crossing and is therefore in a highly sensitive location likely to affect public safety.

7.5 Paragraph 68 goes on to specify the main types of adverts that could cause a danger to road users and includes "(b) those which, because of their size or siting....would be likely to distract road-users because of their unusual nature;..." and (d) "those externally or internally illuminated signs (incorporating either flashing or static lights) including those utilising light emitting diode technology:

- i. where the means of illumination is directly visible from any part of the road;

ii. which, because of their colour, could be mistaken for, or confused with, traffic lights or any other authorised signals;

iii. which, because of their size or brightness, could result in glare and dazzle, or distract road-users, particularly in misty or wet weather; or

iv. which are subject to frequent changes of the display;

and (e) those which incorporate moving or apparently moving elements in their display, or successive individual advertisements which do not display the whole message;"

7.6 The proposed sign fails on most of these counts. Being located parallel to and close to, the London Road at a point adjacent a traffic lighted junction it would distract drivers. Being the only such flashing message screen board it would be overly prominent and attract undue attention, being in stark contrast to the otherwise unlit area within which it is located, other than static street lights. It is considered that it would visually appear 'flashing' by virtue of the rotation of letters/message, which would distract drivers, representing a public highway safety danger.

7.7 Policy DM10 seeks to resist development that would cause pollution through light if the health and safety of users of the vicinity are put at risk. Since the sign would be detrimental to highway safety then the proposal is considered contrary to this policy as well as the new Planning Practice Guidance advice and policy DM21 of the Havant Borough Local Plan (Allocations) Plan, October 2013.

8 Conclusion

8.1 The proposed LED screen display board is considered to be detrimental to both amenity and public safety, by virtue of its excessive visual clutter and location on the building, together with its distraction to drivers at the adjacent traffic junction. It is therefore recommended to refuse advertisement consent.

8.2 It is understood the application seeks to make the presence of the pharmacy more obvious at night time. It is however considered that there would be more appropriate and sympathetic ways to achieve this - for instance the existing individually applied letters forming the main fascia sign could be lit or replaced with a static internally illuminated fascia sign (with appropriate further advert consent as necessary.)

9 RECOMMENDATION:

That the Executive Head of Planning and Built Environment be authorised to **REFUSE ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT** for application APP/14/00218

(A)

(B) for the following reasons

- 1 The proposed LED screen display board, by reason of its siting facing a highway adjacent a traffic lighted junction, and method of rotational display,

would constitute a distraction to drivers and a hazard to road users. It is therefore considered to affect public safety, contrary to advice in the National Planning Policy Framework, 2012 and Planning Practice Guidance on Advertisements, dated 6/3/14 and contrary to policies CS16 and DM10 of the Havant Borough Local Plan (Core Strategy) 2011 and policy DM21 of the Havant Borough Publication Local Plan (Allocations), October 2013

- 2 The erection of this sign in addition to the existing advertisements displayed, would result in an excessive display and clutter of advertisements, which would be detrimental to the visual amenities of the healthcare site and local community within which it is located. Furthermore, its precise siting and height on the building, above the ground floor fascia level, is considered detrimental to the visual appearance of the building. It is therefore considered to be detrimental to amenity, contrary to advice in the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 and Planning Practice Guidance on Advertisements, dated 6/3/14, and contrary to policy CS16 of the Havant Borough Local Plan (Core Strategy) 2011 and policy DM21 of the Havant Borough Publication Local Plan (Allocations), October 2013.