

DELEGATED OFFICER REPORT

Application Ref: F/25/99466

Site Address: THE GEORGE, 492 FAIR OAK ROAD, FAIR OAK, EASTLEIGH, SO50 7AN

Case Officer: Gregg Chapman

Description: Retrospective: Installation of a water filling station and change of use of the existing car park to a car park with storage

Particular Site Constraints?	Yes ☒	No ☐
Listed Building Curtilage Urban Edge Flood Zone 2		

Planning History?	Yes ☒	No ☐
Recent Planning History L/24/96898 - Listed Building Consent: Display of illuminated and non-illuminated signage, installation of 7no. floodlights and 4no. up and down lights, and repainting of exterior of building. Approved. A/24/96899 - Display of 1no. externally illuminated hanging sign, 3no. externally illuminated letter signs, 3no. externally illuminated amenity board signs, 2no. externally illuminated chalkboard signs, 1no. non-illuminated signwritten logo sign, 7no. LED floodlights, and 4no. up and down lights. Approved. L/20/88393 - Listed building consent to display 1no. illuminated double-sided hanging sign; 3no. sets of illuminated lettering; 2no. signwritten portraits; 3no. amenity boards; 2no. up/down lights and 5no. LED floodlights. Approved. A/20/88387 - Consent to display 1no. illuminated double-sided hanging sign; 3no. sets of illuminated lettering; 2no. signwritten portraits; 3no. amenity boards; 2no. up/down lights and 5no. LED floodlights. Approved.		

Publicity:	Letters ☒	Site Notice ☒	Newspaper ☒
Representations:	23 letters of objection; - Visually intrusive and out of keeping with the historic setting of the Grade II Listed Old George pub. - Detracts from the village centre and wider street scene. - Potential breach of listed building regulations due to physical connection to the structure. - Eyesore—large, bright, and inappropriately placed. - Prominent location near the road suggest relocation to the rear of the car park or screened. - Adds to congestion and traffic risks near a busy route and school pedestrian area. - Obstructs views and reduces usable parking for pub patrons. - Unnecessary and better suited to a commercial or industrial setting. - Concern over setting a precedent for further inappropriate installations. 7 letters of support; - Supports nearby shops, local businesses, and the community pub through added footfall and income.		

	- Provides a useful, local water source, reducing travel to Winchester or Southampton. - Nearby resident reports no issues; preferable to gating the site. - Surrounding modern buildings already impact the setting; visual improvements (e.g. cladding) could reduce impact.
Parish Council:	Objection Fair Oak and Horton Heath Parish Council object to the installation of a water filling station in the car park of the George Pub on the grounds that its bright blue colour and prominent siting immediately adjacent to a listed building make it visually intrusive and out of character with both the village and its historic setting. The proposal fails to preserve or enhance the setting of the listed building, contrary to Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which require great weight to be given to the conservation of heritage assets. The structure's location detracts from key features such as the memorial and oak trees, and does not respect the need for careful integration within the village environment. The Council is also concerned about potential impacts on traffic generation, access, and parking, as well as a lack of landscaping or screening to mitigate its visual impact. This objection is based solely on material planning considerations, and for these reasons, the proposal should be refused.
HCC Highways:	No objection
Built Heritage Consultant:	Objection. Proposal causes significant harm to the setting of the Grade II listed pub and the centre of the village generally.

Site Visit:	Yes ☒	No ☐
Details: 24/06/2025		

Policy:
National Planning Policy Framework Planning Practice Guidance Development Plan: The <u>Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036</u> The most relevant policies are Strategic policies S1, S2, S8, S10; and Development Management policies DM1, DM2, DM10 DM12, DM13, DM14, and DM36 Supplementary Planning Documents: Quality Places; Character Area Appraisals.

Assessment:
<u>Principle of Development</u> Planning policy at both local and national levels supports economic diversification and sustainable commercial activity within designated centres, and a water filling station serving local businesses with purified or specialist water aligns with these objectives. The water filling station is broadly compatible with the commercial nature of the area and would support the Public House, which is a community facility in terms of revenue. The principle of development is therefore acceptable, subject to design, access, and amenity considerations.

Heritage and Character and Appearance of the Area

Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a statutory duty on local planning authorities to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting. Paragraphs 206-211 of the NPPF reinforce this requirement by affording great weight to the conservation of designated heritage assets, irrespective of the scale of harm.

The application site is the car park adjacent to The Old George, a Grade II listed public house prominently located in the historic centre of Fair Oak. The building occupies a visually dominant position on the corner of the main road and the former village junction. Although not within a conservation area, the site forms part of a historically sensitive townscape that includes mature oak trees, the locally listed St Thomas' Church, and the village war memorial.

The application seeks retrospective consent for the installation of a free-standing water filling station. The structure is finished in a vivid blue colour with corporate branding and is positioned close to the car park's northern boundary, directly adjacent to the highway and in front of the principal elevation of the listed building.

The siting, scale, and colour of the proposed structure result in an incongruous and visually intrusive addition within the immediate setting of the Grade II listed The Old George Public House a designated heritage asset. The bright blue colour and prominent positioning at the front of the car park visually compete with the listed building, undermining its architectural prominence and historical character. The installation detracts from key visual elements of the village centre, including views towards and from the war memorial, church and the surrounding mature oak trees, which contribute to the local sense of place and heritage value.

The water filling station is visually dominant in key public views of The Old George, particularly when approaching from the east along the B3354. The vivid blue colour and industrial appearance of the unit are starkly at odds with the traditional character of the listed building and surrounding village scene. Its positioning forward of the building line disrupts the architectural composition of the site and significantly undermines the building's historic prominence as a central village landmark.

The proposal fails to integrate sensitively with the surrounding environment and conflicts with Policy DM1 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016–2036, which requires all development to respect the character and appearance of the area and to avoid unacceptable harm to heritage assets. The development also fails to comply with Policies S8 and DM12 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016–2036, which permits development affecting heritage assets only where it sustains and enhances their special interest and setting.

In accordance with paragraph 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The proposed water filling station would provide a source of filtered, purified water for use by local residents and businesses, supporting environmental sustainability objectives and offering convenience to service-based enterprises. The installation may also contribute to the economic diversification of the public house, supporting its ongoing viability in a challenging commercial climate. While these benefits are acknowledged, they are not site-specific and could be delivered through an alternative location or siting that avoids the identified heritage harm. In this case, the prominent positioning, scale, and visual characteristics of the structure cause unjustified harm to the setting of the Grade II listed building. The benefits put forward do not outweigh the harm to the heritage asset's significance, and the proposal therefore fails to satisfy the requirements of paragraph 202 of the NPPF and Policy DM12 of the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan, which seek to ensure that development affecting heritage assets is balanced and appropriately justified.

Highway Matters

The Highway Authority have confirmed that the positioning of the water filling station is far enough from the formal vehicle parking spaces, that a 6.0m aisle width is retained withing which vehicle manoeuvres can be made, and that, as such, no loss of parking will result, and that the positioning of the water filling station is set back a sufficient distance from the positioning of the water filling station is set back a sufficient distance from the carriageway, and as such will not have an impact on visibility splays. The application is not, therefore, considered to be harmful to highway safety.

Noise

No information has been submitted with the application in terms of noise during operation. However, it is noted that amongst the representations objection is not raised in respect of this matter. If it were to be permitted, should the facility raise noise concern, Environmental Health legislation could consider whether nuisance is caused. In addition, if permission were recommended, hours of operation could be conditioned to prevent any noise at inappropriate hours through use or comings and goings.

Other Matters

- There are no adverse impact upon trees or other natural features worthy of retention.
- There are no likely significant impacts on the SPA.
- Concern has been expressed with regards to potential precedent. Every planning application must be considered upon its own merits, with proposals and site contexts for each site differing. The proposal would not, therefore, set a precedent if it were permitted.
- No Flood Risk Assessment has been provided. The proposed building is located in flood zone 2 where less vulnerable and water compatible development such as retail and water treatment uses are allowed without further tests. The structure is considered to be acceptable as it has low vulnerability.

Climate Change:

In July 2019, the Council declared a Climate Change and Environmental Emergency. In doing so it agreed, among other things, to: (a) put in place measures to ensure the Council's own operations and functions achieve carbon neutrality by 2025; (b) work with partners to aim for all projects and services delivered in the Borough to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030; (c) ensure that the Council's procurement policy recognises carbon neutrality as one of its primary considerations; and (d) recognise the urgency of action to mitigate and adapt to climate change in every decision taken by the Council. This is underpinned by the Climate and Environment Emergency Strategy 2020–2030 and the supporting Climate and Environmental Emergency Action Plan – Update June 2020.

The declaration of the Climate Change and Environmental Emergency demonstrates a strong commitment from the Council to achieve net zero. The NPPF, development plan and adopted local plan policy do not set this as a specific target, but it is a material consideration to be considered alongside all other material considerations. In any case addressing climate change is a core part of the NPPF and local plan policy. The need to support the economy is part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment for the adopted local plan, as is an assessment of climate impacts.

Equalities Implications:

Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 created the public sector equality duty. Section 149 states:

- A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- a. eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- b. advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- c. foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

When making policy decisions, the Council must take account of the equality duty and in particular any potential impact on protected groups. It is considered that this application does not raise any equality implications

Conclusion:		
Recommendation:	PERMIT ☐	REFUSE ☒
Comments ...		