Expiry Date - 12/11/2025
Extension of Time -

Development Management – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/1116/25 **Recommendation: – REFUSE**

Site: **The Charmandean Centre Forest Road Worthing West Sussex**

Proposal: **Advertisement consent for display of 5no. internally illuminated advertising boards.**

Date of Site Visit: Various

Neighbours Checked: Y

Additional Neighbours Notified: N

Site and Surroundings

The Charmandean Centre is a long-established events and community venue located at the junction of Forest Road and the A27 (Upper Brighton Road)

It is a distinctive prominent building which has art deco style with brick and render accents and motifs.

The current boundary on the north and north east comprises a low brick wall with tarmac behind.

The site is in a residential area with a mixture of detached and semi-detached houses.

Proposal

The application proposes signage integrated into railings to the north and east boundaries.

The proposed railings will be formed in powder-coated steel or aluminium, in a black finish Inspired by the Art Deco style, the railings will incorporate linear and geometric patterns. The railings are set at a regular height of 1.2 metres, with accented features stepping up to an approximate height of 1.8 metres to contain the signage.

The signage will show event listings, public notices, and local promotions.

The signage will be illuminated as follows:

1. Height 1.1m, width 5.6m, depth 0.1m, height from ground 0.65m, Max height of letters 30cm. Metal frame and protective clear plastic/glass cover. Internally illuminated to 300 cd/sqm, static
2. Height 1.1m, width 6m, depth 0.1m, height from ground 0.65m, Max height of letters 30cm. Metal frame and protective clear plastic/glass cover. Internally illuminated to 300 cd/sqm, static

3. Height 1.1m, width 5.6m, depth 0.1m, height from ground 0.65m, Max height of letters 30cm. Metal frame and protective clear plastic/glass cover. Internally illuminated to 300 cd/sqm, static
4. Height 1.1m, width 5.6m, depth 0.1m, height from ground 0.65m, Max height of letters 30cm. Metal frame and protective clear plastic/glass cover. Internally illuminated to 300 cd/sqm, static
5. Height 1.1m, width 5.6m, depth 0.1m, height from ground 0.65m, Max height of letters 30cm. Metal frame and protective clear plastic/glass cover. Internally illuminated to 300 cd/sqm, static

The applicant has provided the following justification:

- Visual Identity: The enhancements reflect the Centre's civic role and give the building and its perimeter a strong visual presence, especially when viewed from the A27 and Forest Road.
- Cohesion: The Art Deco design language used across railings, signage, lighting, and render detailing creates a unified and refined architectural theme.
- Community Benefit: The proposal provides improved communication with the public through signage displays, alongside better site legibility and security.
- Public Realm: The railings offer an attractive boundary treatment that enhances the streetscape while remaining appropriately scaled and visually permeable

Relevant Planning History:

95/05798/ADV - INSTALLATION OF TWO EXTERNALLY ILLUMINATED BOUNDARY SIGNS AND INTERNALLY ILLUMINATED FASCIA SIGN ON CANOPY ABOVE MAIN ENTRANCE
STATUS: 22nd February 1995.

95/05800/FULL - PROPOSED NEW ENTRANCE STEPS AND HANDRAILS
STATUS: Conditional Consent 11th April 1995.

07/0980/FULL - Installation of extendable electric awning with replacement entrance doors to front entrance and painting of section to front elevation.
STATUS: Conditional Consent 3rd October 2007.

Consultations

None undertaken

Comments from WSCC Highways and National Highways taken from application AWDM/1115/25

National Highways

Recommend that planning permission not be granted for a specified period (see reasons at Annex A);

Recommend that planning permission not be granted for a specified period: Reasons
It is recommended that the application should not be determined for a period of three months until 08 April 2026.

This recommendation can be replaced, renewed, or reviewed during the three-month period, or at its end, dependent on progress made with regards to the outstanding matters.

We will be concerned with proposals that have the potential to impact on the safe and efficient operation of the SRN, in this case, particularly within the vicinity of the A27.
Throughout this response ACTION points for the applicant are highlighted in underlined bold.

Safety Risk Assessment
We have reviewed the submitted Safety Risk Assessment (SRA) and are content that it has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) document GG 104.

Structures

Further information needs to be submitted to demonstrate the structural integrity of the proposal.
A Category 0 (Cat 0) certificate will be required to confirm that the illuminated signage and advertising boards are structurally sound, present no risk to public safety, and have been designed in accordance with the appropriate standards (all should be listed within the certificate).
Designers should clearly confirm which standards have been used, particularly in relation to the connections between the new frames and the existing low-level brick wall. They should verify that the existing walls are capable of supporting the loads imposed by the new frames.

The certificate should be prepared in accordance with the DMRB document CG 300, Appendix J, and signed by suitably qualified engineers. Relevant General Arrangement (GA) drawings must be attached.
Conclusion
Given the above, it is currently not possible to determine whether the application would have an unacceptable impact on the safety, reliability and/or operational efficiency of the SRN.
National Highways currently recommends that planning permission not be granted (other than a refusal if the Council so wishes) for a period of three months until 08 April 2026 to allow the applicant to resolve the outstanding matters.
This recommendation can be replaced, renewed, or reviewed during the three-month period, or at its end, dependent on progress made with regards to the outstanding matters.

Standing advice to the local planning authority

The Climate Change Committee's 2022 Report to Parliament notes that for the UK to achieve net zero carbon status by 2050, action is needed to support a modal shift away from car travel. The NPPF supports this position, with paragraphs 77 and 110 prescribing that significant development should offer a genuine choice of transport modes, while paragraphs 109 and 115 advise that appropriate opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport should be taken up as part of a vision-led approach.
Moreover, the carbon reduction hierarchy (avoid-switch-improve) as set out in clause 4.3 of PAS2080:2023 promotes approaches and measures to minimise resource consumption and thereby reduce carbon emissions.
These considerations should be weighed alongside any relevant Local Plan policies to ensure that planning decisions are in line with the necessary transition to net zero carbon.

Planning Applications Highways

The LHA has been reconsulted on this application following the submission of a Safety Risk Assessment under DMRB GG 104 - the impact on safety on motorway and all-purpose trunk roads. The document has been produced for consideration by National Highways with regards the potential impact of this proposal on the A27. As such the LPA is advised to consult National Highways.

Neighbour Representations

6 Letters of representation (edited)

71 Upper Brighton Road

- The proposal will cause direct light pollution
- The addition of illuminated signage will cause a distraction to motorists and pedestrians
- Noise and environmental impact

75 Upper Brighton Road

- The design is out of keeping with a residential area
- Provide additional events and anti-social behaviour
- Direct Light pollution

76 Upper Brighton Road

- Unwanted direct light spillage
- Out of keeping with the residential area

82 Forest Road

- Additional light pollution

91 Upper Brighton Road

- Out of character with the residential area
- Impact on residential amenity
- Distraction to motorists
- Light pollution

Relevant Planning Policies:

Worthing Local Plan policies (WBC 2023): SP1, DM5, DM6, DM22
National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2024)
National Planning Practice Guidance

Planning Assessment:

The key considerations are the effects on visual amenity and public safety.

Visual Amenity

The Charmandean Centre comprises a large detached distinctive building on the corner of Forest Road and Upper Brighton Road. The building is symmetrical facing onto the corner there is a low wall to the frontage and significant hardstanding to the front and rear. Although a large building used for events and community activities it sits comfortably within its residential area particularly on the south side of Upper Brighton Road with Forest Road where the properties tend to low brick walls and a spacious setting.

The current application is for the advertisement hoardings but this is integrated into the proposed railings. Although a 1.2m high railing may be appropriate for this boundary, the signage would be within higher panels up to a height of 1.8m. These could be solid additions to the boundary treatment and would be illuminated. It is proposed to have 5 such panels one of which would be on the corner.

Although there is currently some signage to the building this is small and relatively discreet.

Local Plan Policy DM6-Public Realm (e) states that:
e) Express consent will only be granted for advertisements which respect the character and appearance of the surrounding area, and do not create a danger or hazard to public safety.
The NPPF at para 141 states: The quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed.

Although the applicant has sought to justify the need for signage, and it is appreciated that the venue is seeking to attract more customers it is considered that illuminated signage is excessive, would take up a large proportion of the proposed

boundary treatment and would have a detrimental impact on the appearance of the building and the residential area in which it is situated.

The signs and illumination would be completely in contrast to the existing building and its open character resulting in signage that would be unduly prominent and assertive and would detract from the building and location.

The proposal is considered to be contrary to policy and the NPPF as the number and illumination would not respect the character and appearance of the building and its curtilage or the surrounding area.

The application has also raised concerns from local residents who are concerned about the adverse impact it would have on light pollution on residential amenity and on the character of the area as well as highway safety. The signage would in direct view of properties on the corner of Upper Brighton Road and Forest Road.

Public Safety

The factors relevant to public safety include such matters as the safety of persons using any highway, and or whether the display of the advertisement in question is likely to obscure, or hinder the ready interpretation of any traffic sign.

In view of the location and illumination WSCC highways and National Highways were consulted on the companion application AWDM/1115/25 (Installation of new 1.2-1.8 metre high Art Deco-style railings with integrated internally illuminated signage and advertising boards; facade alterations including feature white render to north and east elevations and Art Deco-style external lighting)

WSCC highways indicate that the signage will be illuminated to a maximum of 300cd/m2 during the hours of darkness, which is in accordance with the Institute of Lighting Professionals guidance: PLG05 The Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements. As the proposed signage falls within the maximum luminance levels, the LHA would not anticipate that the proposed signage will result in a distraction to drivers travelling along Forest Road. The adverts will be static, with no moving images.

The LHA do not consider that the proposal would have an unacceptable impact on highway safety or result in ‘severe’ cumulative impacts on the operation of the highway network and do not raise objection to the proposal.

National Highways have raised concerns that the proposal has the potential to impact on the safe and efficient operation of the Strategic Road Network (SRN), in this case, particularly within the vicinity of the A27.

They indicate that further information is required to demonstrate the structural integrity of the proposal. As there are fundamental concerns in relation to the application it is not considered prudent to request this information at this stage.

Recommendation:

REFUSE for the reason:-

1. The proposed five internally illuminated hoarding signs within the proposed boundary railings by reason of their size, location, nuisance and method of illumination represent a prominent, overly assertive and discordant form of advertisement out of scale and keeping with the boundary treatment to this distinctive character building, the residential location, and the surrounding street scene in general. It would also be intrusively harmful to the outlook from adjoining residential properties. As such, the proposal is contrary to policies DM5, DM6 and DM22 of the Worthing Local Plan and relevant paragraphs of the NPPF.
2. Without evidence of the structural integrity of the proposal the application has the potential to impact on the safe and efficient operation of the Strategic Road Network (SRN), in this case, particularly within the vicinity of the A27. The proposal is therefore contrary to policy DM5 and DM15 of the Worthing Local Plan 2023, and the relevant policies of the National Planning Policy Framework

Informative

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by identifying matters of concern with the proposal and determining the application within a timely manner, clearly setting out the reason(s) for refusal, allowing the Applicant the opportunity to consider the harm caused and whether or not it can be remedied by a revision to the proposal. The Local Planning Authority is willing to meet with the Applicant to discuss the best course of action and is also willing to provide pre-application advice in respect of any future application for a revised development.

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation? N

Case Officer: Jackie Fox Date: 07.01.2026

Authorised by: Louise Prew Date:16/01/2026