

THE SPINNAKER TOWER GUNWHARF QUAYS PORTSMOUTH PO1 3TT**DISPLAY OF EXTERNALLY ILLUMINATED LETTERING TO LOWER LEG OF TOWER AND 2NO. SIGNS AT ENTRANCE**

[HTTPS://PUBLICACCESS.PORTSMOUTH.GOV.UK/ONLINE-APPLICATIONS/APPLICATIONDETAILS.DO?ACTIVETAB=DOCUMENTS&KEYVAL=RU6HG9MO0JP00](https://publicaccess.portsmouth.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationdetails.do?activetab=documents&keyval=RU6HG9MO0JP00)

Application Submitted By:

Ms Charlotte Smith

On behalf of:

Ms Charlotte Smith

Portsmouth City Council

RDD: 4th May 2023

LDD: 30th June 2023

1.0 SUMMARY OF MAIN ISSUES

1.1 The application is presented to the Planning Committee as it has been submitted by Portsmouth City Council.

1.2 The main considerations within this advert application are:

- Impact on visual amenity of the area; and
- Impact on public safety.

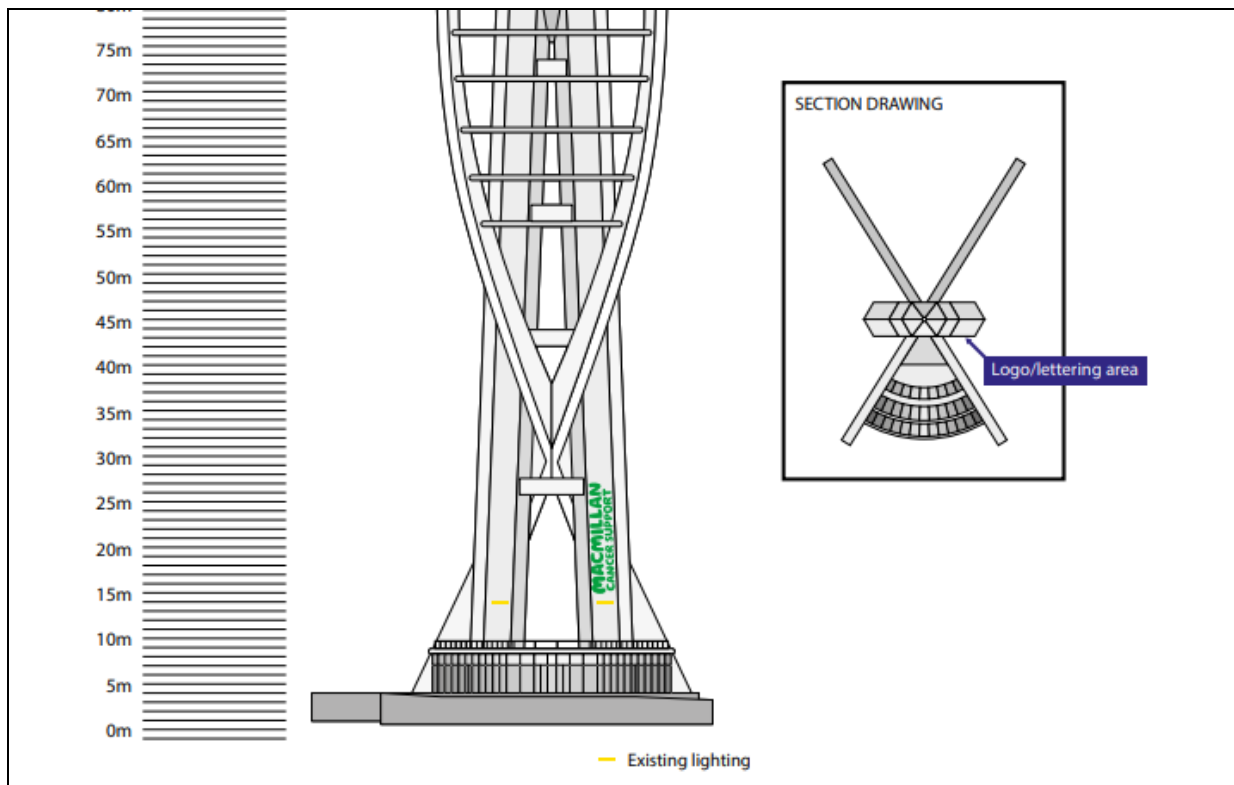
1.3 Site and Surroundings

1.4 This Portsmouth City Council application relates to the Spinnaker Tower which is located to the north-west corner of Gunwharf Quays at the entrance to Portsmouth Harbour. The Tower is primarily a viewing platform with three viewing decks at 100, 105 and 110 metres above sea level, but also incorporates a café and supporting facilities at ground floor level. The structure is constructed primarily in concrete, steel and Glass Reinforced Plastic, all of which is finished in white. However, architectural lighting to the Tower legs and 'sail' allows the Tower to be illuminated in various colours at night.

1.5 The site is situated within the Gunwharf Quays shopping centre and adjacent to Portsmouth Harbour Railway station that incorporates ferry links to Gosport and the Isle of Wight. The immediate area surrounding the Tower comprises a mix of leisure and retail uses with residential accommodation located further to the south. The site is located within the Gunwharf Quays Conservation Area (No.25), but as a result of its overall height (170m) also forms a prominent feature within the adjoining conservation areas to the north and south (H.M. Naval Base & St. George's Square (No.22), and Old Portsmouth (No.4) respectively).

1.6 Proposal

1.7 Advertisement consent is sought for the display of externally illuminated signage in the form of individual lettering to the eastern leg of the Tower, between approximately 15 and 27m above ground level. The lettering would be illuminated by the existing architectural lighting on the Tower. Additionally, two non-illuminated signs are proposed at ground floor level.



Eastern leg of tower



New logo (left) to two ground-floor signs (right)

1.8 Planning History

- 1.9 Advertising consent was granted in 2015 (Ref: 15/00902/ADV) for the display of various illuminated and non-illuminated signage by individual lettering, logos and branding to the Tower legs, and ground floor facilities.

2.0 POLICY CONTEXT

- 2.1 The relevant policies within the Portsmouth Plan (2012) would include:
- PCS23 (Design and Conservation)
- 2.2 In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) July 2021 due weight has been given to the relevant policies in the above plan.

3.0 CONSULTATIONS

3.1 Queen's Harbour Master

- 3.2 Comments yet to be received at the time of writing.

3.3 Gosport Borough Council

- 3.4 No objections raised.

4.0 REPRESENTATIONS

- 4.1 At the time of writing, no representations have been received.

5.0 COMMENT

- 5.1 The main considerations within this advert application are:

- Impact on visual amenity of the area; and
- Impact on public safety.

5.2 Impact on Amenity

- 5.3 The National Planning Policy Framework States: *'The quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed.'*
- 5.4 When determining applications, the Local Planning Authority (LPA) must consider what impact a proposal would have on both designated and non-designated heritage assets. Section 66 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 (as amended) places a duty on the LPA to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Furthermore, Section 72 of the Act requires that LPAs pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.
- 5.5 The Spinnaker Tower stands as a significant landmark at the entrance to Portsmouth Harbour, the gateway to the city of Portsmouth from the sea. The Tower was constructed to mark the Millennium celebrations and to form a focal point to the 'Renaissance of Portsmouth Harbour' including the redevelopment of what is now known as Gunwharf Quays. The Tower has become an iconic feature of the skyline, intrinsically linked with the city of Portsmouth, and instantly recognisable on a national and international level. The success of its design is derived not only from its obvious height (170m), but from its simple elegant form that represents a wind-filled Spinnaker Sail.
- 5.6 The Tower previously featured branding for the Emirates Spinnaker Tower, which included painting blue and gold up the majority of the body of the tower. The proposed Macmillan branding is considerably more discreet than this previous consent and only

features lettering for Macmillan on one of the legs of the Tower. Additionally, the Tower would retain its white colour.

- 5.7 As a result of the height of the Tower's height, the advertisement would be visible from within the Gunwharf Quays development as well as Old Portsmouth, the harbour and Gosport. The contrast between the green proposed lettering and the white of the tower would be quite strong but inevitable with that white background. Given the Tower's setting against a backdrop of a large commercial development, it is considered that the prominence of the advertisement would not be out of character with the surrounding area and would not detract from the character or the original integrity of the Tower or Gunwharf Quays. Brightly coloured advertisements are often found within marine environments and are even a common feature of the spinnakers that influenced the Tower's original design concept.
- 5.8 It is accepted that the tower is visible beyond Portsmouth and Gosport. Long distance views can be observed from Portchester, Hayling Island, the Isle of Wight, across The Solent and as far afield as Calshot to the west and Goodwood to the east. However, whilst the Tower's unique silhouette may be visible at these distances, it is considered that individual letters/logos that make up the advertisement would not be perceptible.
- 5.9 In terms of heritage assets, the Tower is located within the Gunwharf Quays Conservation Area (No.25) that contains a number of Grade II Listed Buildings including the Old Customs House, The Royal Marines Infirmary, The Vulcan Building, The Perimeter Wall and the Main Gate and Lodges. To the south the Old Portsmouth Conservation Area (No.4) includes Spice Island/'Point' (northern end of Broad Street) located directly opposite the Spinnaker Tower, a popular gathering place for residents and tourist wishing to observe activity in and around the harbour. The Spice Island Inn and the Still and West Public Houses, both Grade II Listed, are prominent features of this peninsular.
- 5.10 Across the Harbour a number of heritage assets are located with the shadow of the Tower within Gosport. This would include the 'Haslar Peninsula', 'Royal Clarence Yard' and 'High Street' Conservation Areas that are home to a number of Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings and Buildings of Local Interest (The Local List).
- 5.11 It is accepted that the Spinnaker Tower represents a significant feature of the skyline when viewed from certain positions within the adjoining conservation areas. However, due to the degree of separation provided by Portsmouth Harbour and the presence of intervening structures, it is not considered that the advertisement, would not affect the character and appearance of the conservation areas themselves or the or the integrity or immediate setting of any of the heritage assets located within them.
- 5.12 Whilst Gunwharf Quays is designated as a conservation area, many of the buildings surrounding the Tower are of a modern design having been constructed within the last 20-years. The area's significance is derived from the quality of these new build elements, particularly those on the waterfront and accessible to the general public, and their relationship with other heritage assets and features of historic interest retained to reflect the former naval use of the area. The conservation area also forms part of a busy leisure facility where advertisements are an established feature of the street scene. The local planning authority has worked closely with the operators of Gunwharf Quays and individual businesses to ensure that advertisements are of a high quality and sympathetic to their setting. It is considered that the display of the adverts on a large modern structure within a busy commercial development would preserve the overall character and appearance of the Gunwharf Quays Conservation Area. The degree of separation and number of intervening structures would also prevent harm to the integrity or immediate setting of the Grade II listed buildings and structures within the Gunwharf Quays.

- 5.13 The advertisements proposed to the ground floor entrance of the Tower would replace existing adverts, are non-illuminated and of modest size, and design. Given the existing and surrounding adverts within Gunwharf Quays they would be considered accepted in their visual amenity.
- 5.14 As the proposal is seen to preserve the character and appearance of the Gunwharf Quays and adjoining conservation areas, and the integrity or immediate setting of other heritage assets, so meet the requirements of the NPPF and the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act.
- 5.15 Impact on Public Safety
- 5.16 The Spinnaker Tower is a prominent feature of Portsmouth Harbour which sees significant leisure, commercial and naval shipping movements throughout the day and night. Whilst the advert on the Tower itself is of a considerable scale, it is proportionate to the size of the Tower and would not be illuminated other than by the existing architectural lighting to the tower which is static in nature. As the proposed advert would not obstruct or appear similar to navigation aids or physically oversail the harbour, it is considered that it is unlikely to interfere with navigation within the harbour to the detriment of public safety.
- 5.17 Any comments received from the Queen's Harbour Master will be considered and provided at the meeting of the Planning Committee.
- 5.18 Conclusion
- 5.19 The proposed advertisements are considered to be appropriate and supportable.

RECOMMENDATION Conditional Consent

Conditions

Standard Advert Time Limit

- 1) This consent shall expire at the end of a period of five years from the date of this approval.

Reason: This condition is specified in the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

Standard Advertisement Conditions

- 2) a. No advertisement is to be displayed without the permission of the owner of the site or any other person with an interest in the site entitled to grant permission.
- b. No advertisement shall be sited or displayed so as to -
- (i) endanger persons using any highway, railway, waterway, dock, harbour or aerodrome (civil or military)
 - (ii) obscure, or hinder the ready interpretation of, any traffic sign, railway signal or aid to navigation by water or air
 - (iii) hinder the operation of any device used for the purpose of security or surveillance or for measuring the speed of any vehicle.
- c. Any advertisement displayed, and any site used for the display of advertisements, shall be maintained in a condition that does not impair the visual amenity of the site.

d. Any structure or hoarding erected or used principally for the purpose of displaying advertisements shall be maintained in a condition that does not endanger the public.

e. Where an advertisement is required under these Regulations to be removed, the site shall be left in a condition that does not endanger the public or impair visual amenity.

Reason: These conditions are specified in the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007.

Plans

- 3) Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, the permission hereby granted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved drawings - Drawing numbers: Section 1: Application of the Macmillan logo to the Spinnaker Tower; Section 2: Two x triangular signs at the entrance to the Spinnaker Tower; and Site Plan: 100019671 (2020).

Reason: To ensure the development is implemented in accordance with the permission granted.

Pro-activity Statement

Notwithstanding that the City Council seeks to work positively and pro-actively with the applicant through the application process in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, in this instance the proposal was considered acceptable and did not therefore require any further engagement with the applicant.