

Application Number:	P/FUL/2022/01909
Webpage:	https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/
Site address:	Weymouth Library Great George Street Weymouth Dorset DT4 8NN
Proposal:	Installation of mural artwork cladding boards
Applicant name:	Weymouth Town Council
Case Officer:	Katrina Trevett
Ward Member(s):	Cllr Orrell

1.0 In accordance with the Council's scheme of delegation this application is brought to committee for determination as Dorset Council is the landowner.

2.0 Summary of recommendation: Grant subject to conditions.

3.0 Reason for the recommendation:

- Enhancements to public realm, visual amenity and local character.
- No harm to heritage assets.
- No contribution to flood risk.

4.0 Key planning issues

Issue	Conclusion
Principle of development	The proposals are supported in principle as they would enhance local character and relate to the ecological, geological and historical interest of the area.
Conservation and heritage	The proposals will not result in harm to the designated heritage asset (Weymouth Town Centre Conservation Area) and will enhance the character/appearance of the Conservation Area in accordance with Section 16 of the NPPF (2021).
Flood Risk	The proposals would not give rise to any increased risk of flooding given they are wall mounted.
Highway safety	The proposed boards will be wall mounted and will not impede users of the pavement/highway.

Impact on amenity	This proposal will enhance visual amenity; it will not create neighbour amenity issues given its wall mounted and non-illuminated. No objections received.
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5.0 Description of Site

The application site is located within the western corner of School Street. The building itself is modern in design and form. There is a pedestrian walkway to the side of the building linking to Commercial Road. The site is within the Weymouth Town Centre Conservation Area.

6.0 Description of Development

The application seeks to install mural artwork on the side of the library building. The mural will measure 7.32m high by 2.44m wide.

The proposed materials would be constructed of plywood with applied fireproof system and fire-retardant paint (eggshell paints). All proposed fixings are to be a minimum of marine grade 316L stainless steel. The edges of every butt joint will be coated with a thin layer of clear intumescent external sealant to prevent water ingress. The Town Council plan bi-annual inspection and any required maintenance of all boards.

The artwork in this location relates to the library setting with a theme of “life and learning”. The colours will tone with the buff/yellow brick of the building and are appropriate to the location. The mural is made up of 6 boards.

7.0 Relevant Planning History

P/PAP/2021/00508 – Pre application advice sought for Mural Trail of Artwork at 10 locations around the town

8.0 List of Constraints

- Weymouth Town Centre Conservation Area (statutory duty to preserve or enhance the significance of heritage assets under the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990)
- Defined Development Boundary; Weymouth
- Weymouth and Portland - Important Local Buildings
- Weymouth Town Centre Strategy; Weymouth Town Centre
- Flood Zone 3
- Flood Zone 2

9.0 Consultations

All consultee responses and representations can be viewed in full on the website.

Consultees

1. **Weymouth Town Council** – No Objection
2. **Melcombe Regis Ward** – No comments received
3. **Asset & Property** – No comments received
4. **Conservation Officer** – No objection, subject to temporary time condition

Representations received

Weymouth Civic Society – General comments made in relation to the framing of the boarding and the words written on the board. Case officer response - as a result, the artwork has been amended and simplified with the wording removed.

The Civic Society made a further comment that they would expect to see any planning permissions time limited as they have concerns about the appearance of the mural over time due to deterioration and dilapidation.

No other representations have been received.

10.0 Relevant Policies

West Dorset Weymouth and Portland Local Plan 2015

- 10.1 So far as this application is concerned the following policies of the Local Plan are considered to be relevant:
- ENV4 – Heritage assets
 - ENV10 – The landscape and townscape setting
 - ENV12 – The design and positioning of buildings.
 - WEY1 – Weymouth town centre strategy

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- 10.2 So far as this application is concerned the following sections and paragraphs are considered relevant;
- 12 – Achieving well-designed places
 - 14 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
 - 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
 - Paragraph 38 – Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

Other material considerations

- Weymouth Town Centre Masterplan SPD
- Weymouth Town Centre Conservation Area Character Appraisal
- Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas (2002)

- Urban Design (2002)

11.0 Human rights

Article 6 - Right to a fair trial.

Article 8 - Right to respect for private and family life and home.

The first protocol of Article 1 Protection of property.

This recommendation is based on adopted Development Plan policies, the application of which does not prejudice the Human Rights of the applicant or any third party.

12.0 Public Sector Equalities Duty

As set out in the Equalities Act 2010, all public bodies, in discharging their functions must have “due regard” to this duty. There are 3 main aims:-

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people
- Encouraging people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where participation is disproportionately low.

Whilst there is no absolute requirement to fully remove any disadvantage the Duty is to have “regard to” and remove or minimise disadvantage and in considering the merits of this planning application the planning authority has taken into consideration the requirements of the Public Sector Equalities Duty.

13.0 Financial benefits

13.1 There would be no direct financial benefits as a result of this proposal although the installation of art throughout the town is hoped to have general economic benefits from bringing circulation of visitors/residents to more parts of the town they may not generally visit but also encouraging more visitors generally.

14.0 Climate Implications

14.1 Energy would be used a result of the production of the building materials and during the installation process, however that is inevitable when providing new installations and a balance has to be struck between providing improved visual development versus conserving natural resources and minimising energy use. The installation of the artwork is hoped to encourage sustainable movement around the town rather than needing to travel great distance by car.

15.0 Planning Assessment

Principle of development

15.1 This scheme is one of ten which have come forward for Weymouth as part of the Weymouth Town Council and Weymouth BID partnership to install a mural art trail

around the town. The trail aims to attract and inspire a wide range of residents and visitors to explore and enjoy the artworks inspired by the history and culture of Weymouth whilst enhancing the visual appearance of the buildings they are on and increasing footfall to the economic benefit of local businesses recovering from the Covid 19 pandemic. All of the mural's including this one have been subject to community consultation, an artists' brief & subsequent appointment of the artist and pre-application discussion with Dorset Council's Conservation team which has then brought forward the finished artwork for each of the ten installations.

- 15.2 This particular mural would be sited within the defined development boundary of Weymouth, where development proposals are generally supported. The principle for supporting this scheme is also gained from policy ENV10 (iv) which states that opportunities to incorporate features that would enhance local character, including public art or that relate to the historical, ecological or geological interest of a site should be taken where appropriate. In this instance not only would the proposals be for public art which would enhance local character but the artworks themselves are intended to relate to the ecological, geological and historical interest of the area.
- 15.3 The mural would contribute to achieving the objectives of the Weymouth Town Centre Masterplan of achieving a diverse, thriving town centre, providing high quality destination streets creating an attractive and vibrant town centre and providing an active waterfront. It is also supported by policy WEY1 (Weymouth Town Centre Strategy) of the Local plan, which has the aims of retaining and enhancing the areas character, having an attractive public realm, supporting a thriving town centre and improving first impressions of the area.

Heritage

- 15.4 The Council's Conservation Officer has considered the scheme and notes that there would be no harm in heritage terms to the character or appearance of the Weymouth Town Centre Conservation Area or the setting of nearby listed buildings (all designated heritage assets) in accordance with Section 16 of the NPPF (2021). The conservation officer notes that the installations will create visual interest and make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area, consequently enhancing it also in accordance with Section 16 of the NPPF (2021).

16.0 Conclusion

- 16.1 The proposed art installation on Weymouth Library is considered to enhance the visitor experience and public realm of Weymouth and is supported by policies ENV10 and WEY1 of the West Dorset Weymouth and Portland Local Plan 2015, and the Weymouth Town Centre Masterplan. The Mural has been amended to take into account the comments raised by the Weymouth Civic Society. Furthermore, the proposals would not result in any harm to designated heritage assets and will enhance the Weymouth Town Centre Conservation Area in accordance with policy ENV4 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan (2015) and Section 16 of the NPPF (2021). Overall, the scheme enhances visual amenity in accordance with policy ENV12 of the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan (2015).

17.0 Recommendation

GRANT subject to conditions.

1. The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: This condition is required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Location plan

Proposed Elevation & Mural design plan (Revised design)

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

Informative

1. Informative: National Planning Policy Framework Statement

In accordance with paragraph 38 of the NPPF the council, as local planning authority, takes a positive approach to development proposals and is focused on providing sustainable development.

The council works with applicants/agents in a positive and proactive manner by:

- offering a pre-application advice service, and
- as appropriate updating applications/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application and where possible suggesting solutions.

In this case:

-The application was acceptable as submitted and no further assistance was required.