

Application Number:	P/LBC/2025/04317
Webpage:	https://planning.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/plandisp.aspx?recno=416070
Site address:	War Memorial, The Esplanade, Weymouth DT4 7RN
Proposal:	Install 3 new Portland stone plaques to be fixed to the existing panels of the memorial.
Applicant name:	Weymouth Town Council
Case Officer:	Nicola Yeates
Ward Member(s):	Cllr Orrell

1. This application has been brought to committee as the structure to which the application relates is owned by Dorset Council.

2. **Summary of recommendation:** Grant subject to conditions.

3. **Key planning issues**

Issue	Conclusion
Impact on Heritage Asset, Setting and Conservation Area.	No adverse impact.

4. **Description of site**

4.1 The American War Memorial is Grade II Listed and located within the Weymouth Town Centre Conservation Area in a prominent position along the promenade opposite The Royal Hotel. As described within the submitted Design, Access and Heritage Statement, this memorial commemorates the American servicemen who passed through Weymouth to the beaches of Normandy in the Second World War.

4.2 The memorial is constructed of Portland stone and comprises of an octagonal pedestal with four main load bearing panels and four intermediate panels, one of which is a timber access door. The east facing panel has a copper plaque presented by the 14th Major Port of the United States Army. Subsequent plaques commemorating the involvement and sacrifice of the American troops during World War II have been added to the memorial in 1999, 2002 and 2004. Above the pedestal, a stone base inset with decorative bronze grilles to four of the sides, carries a pillar constructed in two stages; the lower section is square in plan with deep mouldings at the corners to form a cruciform shape, and the upper section is octagonal and is surmounted by a glass lantern (electric) with leaded lights.

4.3 The memorial was first listed in 2009 and the listing description states for the following principal reasons *A dignified piece of symbolism, imaginatively sited on the sea front. It is a poignant reminder of the sacrifice of American servicemen during World War Two. It has group value with a number of listed buildings, including the Weymouth Cenotaph to the north east.*

5. **Description of development**

Install 3 new Portland stone plaques to be fixed to the existing panels of the memorial.

6. Background and relevant planning history

11/00366/LBC3 - Decision: GRA - Decision Date: 01/06/2011

Essential structural repairs to return the memorial to good structural condition.

WP/13/00486/PRE - Decision: Response given - Decision Date: 19/07/2013

Pre-application consultation - Extension to war memorial.

WP/17/00962/LBC - Decision: GRA - Decision Date: 02/05/2018

Addition of a cast bronze commemorative plaque to the front stone plinth of Weymouth Cenotaph.

P/PAP/2025/00028 - Decision: Response given - Decision Date: 08/04/2025

Restoration of American War Memorial and new Bandstand.

7. List of constraints

Grade II Listed WEYMOUTH D-DAY PORT MEMORIAL HE Reference: 1393112 (*statutory duty to preserve or enhance the significance of heritage assets under the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990*).

Within the 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*).

8. Consultations

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

Consultees

- Weymouth TC** - The Council supports this application and raises no objection. The Committee is pleased to see that Weymouth Town Council is being seen to act when it needs to, to maintain public memorials.
- Melcombe Regis Ward** - A necessary and careful restoration of this significant monument. It marks an important time in our town's rich history.

Representations received

Total - Objections	Total - No Objections	Total - Comments
1	0	War Memorial Trust – From the documentation available we recognise that various options have been considered for addressing some deterioration to some of the panels. From the images available it appears that the deterioration is localised and limited. At this time we would suggest that works are not urgently required but rather an accurate record should be made and

		ongoing monitoring should occur. If works are undertaken the Trust would raise concerns over the current proposals to introduce new flush plaques to the current recesses. Whilst the change in appearance would be fairly minimal, and replicate an earlier approach already found on the memorial, there are concerns and issues which need to be recognised with this approach. By introducing flush panels these will be exposed to greater surface run off than recessed panels. This is likely one of the causes for the Ranger plaques rapid rate of deterioration in comparison to the historic panels. The main issue appears to be the loss of paint to this particular panel, this could be renewed to improve legibility rather than undertaking a more invasive removal and replacement. In addition the issues with the panels are likely to largely be due to environmental factors which cannot be altered and therefore any intervention will likely have a limited life span and there is an issue relating to reversibility of inset panels and the risk of damage to the original fabric if later removal is required. In 2010 a structural report was produced for the memorial to inform a conservation program of works. At this time it was noted that the plinth was in good condition. Has any further condition assessment been undertaken to determine the causes of the deterioration to help inform the approach?
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9. Duties

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 - includes a general duty to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses when considering whether to grant listed building consent.

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

10. Relevant policies

Development Plan

West Dorset Weymouth and Portland Local Plan 2015

The following policies of the Local Plan are considered to be relevant:

ENV4 – Heritage Assets

Material considerations

National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (as amended 2025)

Section 16 'Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment'- Paragraph 212 says that when considering designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation, irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance. The effect of an application on the significance of non-designated heritage assets should also be taken into account (para 216).

Emerging Local Plans:

Paragraph 49 of the NPPF provides that local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

- The stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant plan policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the NPPF (the closer the policies in the emerging plan are to the policies of the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

The draft Dorset Council Local Plan

The Dorset Council Local Plan Options Consultation took place between January and March 2021. Being at a very early stage of preparation, the relevant policies in the draft Dorset Council Local Plan should be accorded very limited weight in decision making.

Emerging Neighbourhood Plans

Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan - The Weymouth Neighbourhood Plan has been submitted for examination but has limited weight applied to decision making until it is 'made'. The draft plan (December 2024) includes the following policies of relevance:

W45 - Heritage Assets

11. 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. 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. The proposal will not impact on people with protected characteristics.

13. Assessment

Impact on Heritage Asset, Setting and Conservation Area

- 13.1 The proposal seeks to install 3 new Portland stone plaques due to the existing plaques suffering from exposure to the elements.
- 13.2 For identification purposes only the panels are ‘Ranger’, ‘We Remember ...’ and ‘Unveiled’. The latter 2no. would be fixed to the existing panels of the memorial. It is understood from the submitted documentation that it is not possible to remove these existing panels due to structural stability and therefore it is proposed that the new panels will be fixed to the existing.
- 13.3 The former 1no. (Ranger) is already an applied panel and therefore this would be removed and replaced with a new ‘like for like’ stone panel.
- 13.4 The submitted Statement details the new panels would be Portland Stone, with the ‘We Remember Your Sacrifice’ and ‘Ranger’ panels being 1.5” x 24” x 44”, and the ‘Unveiled’ panel being 1.5” x 24” x 32”. The inscription for each panel would be cut and enamelled black as the existing panels.
- 13.5 The proposed works were discussed at pre-app stage to which there was no objection to the proposal in principle.
- 13.6 The comments received from the War Memorials Trust are noted regarding the proposal and suggested recording and monitoring in the first instance and concerns regarding the exposure of flush fitted panels. In response, further supporting information was received from the Agent detailing previous works and monitoring and further information regarding the requirement for flush fitting panels. In this instance, it is considered that the Agent has provided clear and convincing justification for the proposed works.
- 13.7 The proposal is considered positive, enabling the panels to be easier to read and would not cause detrimental harm to the Listed structure nor detrimentally alter the appearance of this heritage asset. Furthermore, the proposal would not impact the setting of the neighbouring Listed buildings nor the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

14. Conclusion

- 14.1 The proposal would not be detrimental to the special architectural, historic and group value of this heritage asset and therefore would not result in harm to the significance of the Listed structure.

- 14.2 The proposal would not detrimentally alter the appearance of this heritage asset and therefore would not result in harm to the neighbouring Listed buildings nor the special character and local distinctiveness of the Weymouth Town Centre Conservation Area.
- 14.3 In reaching this conclusion the proposal has been assessed with regard to the duties under section 16 of the NPPF (2024) and applying Sections 16 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

15. Recommendation: Grant listed building consent subject to the following conditions:

1. The work to which this listed building consent relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date on which the consent is granted.

Reason: This condition is required to be imposed by reason of Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended).

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

PP-14182156v1 Location Plan

Reason: To preserve the architectural and historical qualities of the building.

3. The works hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved documents:

Proposed Replacement Plaques

Reason: To preserve the architectural and historical qualities of the building.

Informative Notes:

1. Informative: National Planning Policy Framework Statement

In accordance with paragraph 39 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 applicants/agents of any issues that may arise in the processing of their application and where possible suggesting solutions.

In this case:

- The applicant was provided with pre-application advice.
- The application was acceptable as submitted and no further assistance was required.