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Conservation & Design
Chichester District Council
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14th September 2016

Dear Sirs

Further to our letter of 11th May 2016, subsequent meeting with Lone Le Vay of CDC Conservation and Design and the meeting of our Planning Committee on 17th August 2016 Selsey Town Council has resolved to respectfully request the de-designation of the Conservation Area at High Street, Selsey. This is not a decision reached lightly and we give the following reasons for such below.

There are undoubtedly some beautiful vernacular buildings on the High Street. These are all listed and will have the full protection of the planning laws whatever plans for the future development of the High Street are submitted. However, to balance that there are some hideous buildings that have no place in any conservation area. The conservation area is not monitored or enforced effectively. Consequently the original idea of conserving all that is good on the High Street has failed. There are inconsistencies in the planning history of Selsey High Street and that has led to confusion as to what is worthy of conserving/preserving and problems faced by developers when new buildings are proposed.

Just two examples to give a flavour of the inconsistencies:- A doorway that had a plan to be widened to meet Disabled Access was refused on the grounds that it was an original Georgian doorway. This 'original' doorway was constructed in the 1970s and there is photographic evidence of this. However a truly original and 'typical' Selsey flint wall that stood on the High Street was permitted to be removed and replaced by a picture window without being scrutinised by the Planning committee.

The Conservation area restricts the appearance of other buildings in view of the High Street. When the Budgens development took place in Warner's Yard the building was delayed by 6 to 8 weeks because the flint panels did not look like a typical Selsey flint wall. A typical flint wall in Selsey depends on the state of the beach at the time the wall was built so if the flints were large the wall was built of large stones. If the beach was covered in smaller stones then the wall at the time was built of smaller stones. The equation is simple. Subsequently, the acceptable flint panels have been removed to accommodate a secondary retail outlet to be replaced by glass and steel.

Now consider the 'Emporium'. The building is at best an eyesore and is matched by the 'New Parade' neither of which have any right to exist in a conservation area and do absolutely nothing to enhance the 'experience' of the High Street.



Developers have no idea what is acceptable given such contrasts in quality of buildings on the High Street and given that we need much of it redeveloped and enhanced, having the Damoclean sword of a conservation area to deal with is a significant disincentive to developers.

The removal of the Conservation area status on the High Street will allow the future to be planned and take account of new styles and materials that can be blended into the fabric of the High Street, allow developers to build sympathetically, consider the location and improve the look of the High Street. STC in conjunction with CDC planners can achieve this much more easily than being shackled by a Conservation Area status.

It should be noted that the creation of a new Conservation Area at East Selsey is supported by the Town Council's Planning Committee.

Yours faithfully

Mike Beal
Chairman