

**5h E/12/0057/A – Unauthorised advertisement for the Axe and Compass PH at Land south of Junction with Ford Street, Station Road, Braughing, SG11 2PN**

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**Parish: BRAUGHING CP**

**Ward: BRAUGHING**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Director of Neighbourhood Services, in consultation with the Director of Finance and Support Services, be authorised to commence legal proceedings under Section 224 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and to take any such other steps as may be required to secure the removal of the unauthorised advertisement at the site.

Reason why it is expedient to commence legal proceedings:

1. The advertisement, by reason of its size and siting, is detrimental to the visual amenities and character of the area and the Braughing Conservation Area, contrary to Policy BH15 of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007.

\_\_\_\_\_ (005712A.CB)

**1.0 Background:**

- 1.1 The site is shown on the Ordnance Survey extract. It is located on Station Road, Braughing, approximately 40m south of the junction with Ford Street and is located within the Braughing Conservation Area.
- 1.2 Concerns were expressed in February 2012 regarding the erection of a sign on a field fence adjacent to Station Road, which advertised The Axe and Compasses public house in The Street, Braughing.
- 1.3 Officers visited the site on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2012 and, after viewing the signage, were of the opinion that the signage did not benefit from 'deemed consent' and sought either an application for advertisement consent to regularise the signage, or the removal of the sign.
- 1.4 An application was subsequently submitted and refused, under reference number 3/12/0934/AD, for advertisement consent. An appeal was lodged, and enforcement action was held in abeyance whilst the appeal was considered by the Planning Inspectorate.
- 1.5 The appeal was however dismissed in May 2013 and, following that

decision, Officers wrote to the owner of the public house and again requested the signage was removed. Whilst positive correspondence was received and the signage was initially removed, further concerns were expressed that the signage had been re-displayed, and it remains in situ to date.

## **2.0 Planning History:**

2.1 The most relevant planning history for the site can be summarised as follows:

3/12/0934/AD	Retention of existing directional advertisement board to the Axe and Compasses.	Refused. Appeal – dismissed.
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## **3.0 Policy:**

3.1 The relevant policy of the East Herts Local Plan Second Review April 2007 is:

BH15 – Advertisements in Conservation Areas.

3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework is also a relevant material consideration.

## **4.0 Considerations:**

4.1 The site is located within the Braughing Conservation Area and the impact of the signage on the amenity of the area, including the historical environment, is the key consideration in this instance.

4.2 Advertisement Consent was refused for the signage due to the size and siting of the sign, which was considered to be detrimental to the amenities and character of the area, and in particular the Braughing Conservation Area.

4.3 It is worth noting that the sign is sited a significant distance from the Axe and Compasses itself, and its siting on the fencing of the open rural area further exacerbates its prominence within the area and its detrimental impact on the area. The appeal inspector, in dismissing the appeal in May 2013 stated that the sign 'is highly visible' and:

*'It is an uncharacteristic feature of the rural landscape detracting from its character and eroding its contribution to the historic*

*village....Although the appellants suggest that the purpose of the sign is to direct visitors to the Axe and Compass pubic house it advertises, this is not immediately obvious from its wording. It is mainly a promotional sign with little information on how to get to the pub. The benefits in this regard are limited and would not justify the sign. In conclusion, the negative impact of the advertisement board on the character and appearance of the Braughing Conservation Area would be harmful to the visual amenity of the area.'*

- 4.4 Overall, the signage is contrary to Policy BH15 and Section 7 of the National Planning Policy Framework, and results in an unacceptable level of harm to visual amenity and the character of the Braughing Conservation Area.
- 4.5 After the harm to visual amenity and the Braughing Conservation Area has been clearly identified by both Council Officers and the Planning Inspectorate, it is considered expedient to formally require removal of the unauthorised signage.
- 5.0 Recommendation:**
- 5.1 For the above reasons it is recommended that authorisation be given to commence legal proceedings under Section 224 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and to take any such other steps as may be required to secure the removal of the unauthorised advertisements at the site.