

Our Ref: VH/KN0105/23

14 November 2023

Warwick District Council
Development Services
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Dear Sir / Madam,

Premier Inn Hotel Regency Arcade, 154-156 Parade, Leamington Spa CV32 4BQ
Application for Advertisement Consent and Listed Building Consent
Advert Consent Planning Portal Reference PP-12550043
Listed Building Consent Planning Portal Reference PP-12550072

We are instructed by Premier Inn Hotels Ltd. to submit these applications for advertisement consent and listed building consent for a scheme of signage at the above site.

Specifically, the applications propose:

“A scheme of signage including 1no. halo illuminated individual letter sign and 2no. wall mounted directional signs”

Both applications have been submitted online via the Planning Portal and in addition to the completed forms, they comprise the following:

Site Location Plan;
Signage Detail Pack Ref. 18540 Rev. C

This letter forms part of both applications and should be read in support of them

Background

The existing signs on this hotel have been in place since circa 2012 and as such and in line with the branding principles of Premier Inn, an update is required. Both listed building and advertisement consent are required at this location in order to facilitate the upgrading and replacement of the current signage as the application building is Grade II listed.



Site and Surrounds

These applications relate to the Premier Inn 154-156 Parade, Leamington Spa, CV32 4BQ. The hotel forms part of the Grade II listed Parade within the Leamington Spa Conservation Area. The hotel extends to four storeys, with its main frontage on the Parade and the rear of the hotel extending to Bedford Street.

The hotel falls within a busy, commercial and town centre location and as such there are many traditional town centre uses surrounding the site. Directly to the south of the hotel is a Co-Op supermarket and to the north is a retail outlet. The associated Bar and Block restaurant sits directly to the north of the proposal site.

The Parade is a busy non pedestrianised route through the town, with the primary retail frontage being at the more northerly end of the road and the River Leam to the south.

Planning History

The following planning history is considered relevant to this proposal

W/11/1246/LB - Installation of halo-illuminated fascia letters, window vinyls, a non-illuminated tray sign and a hanging sign (to Parade and Bedford Street elevations).
Approved December 2011

W/11/1236 - Display of halo-illuminated fascia letters, window vinyls, a non-illuminated tray sign and a hanging sign (to Parade and Bedford Street elevations).
Approved December 2011

W/11/0496 - Change of use from A1/B1(a)/D1 to A1 (retail) and C1 (hotel with ancillary accommodation including restaurant/bar/coffee shop) with alterations to east, south and west elevations, including new/replacement window openings, provision of external rooftop plant, signage zones and associated internal and external works.
Approved April 2011

W/11/0497/LB - Alterations to the east, south and west elevations including new/replacement window openings, provision of external rooftop plant, signage zones and other internal and external works associated with a change of use to a hotel.

Proposal

This proposal seeks to provide clear and high-quality signage that fits with current Premier Inn branding. Premier Inn is in the process of upgrading and renewing its signage across its portfolio and this proposal forms part of this drive. The Leamington Spa hotel is an important and prominent hotel



and it is important for the business operation that it displays the most up to date branding and signage. The existing signage has been in situ since circa 2012 and as such requires replacement .

Consent is sought for 3no signs to be located on the Parade, Bedford Street and Bedford Place elevations of the hotel. The proposed signs are broadly similar to the existing signs and have been designed as part of the wider Premier Inn brand following its established and high-quality principles.

Item 01 – Individual letter Halo Illuminated Sign.

This sign will be in broadly the same position as the existing sign, above the entrance to the hotel and is broadly similar in size. The sign will extend to circa 2.5 metres in width, 40cm in height and have a depth of 80mm including brackets. It will be finished in Premier Inn Purple with white halo lighting. No logo is proposed here.

Item 02 – Individual Letter Sign

This sign is included within the pack in order to demonstrate the reduction in signage offered by this scheme. Sign 02 is an individual letter sign located at the rear of the hotel. This sign will be completely removed and not replaced.

Item 03 - Wall Mounted Directional Sign

Item 03 is a simple non illuminated wall mounted directional sign located at the rear of the hotel. It is 900mm in width and 400mm in height and will be finished in Premier Inn purple and sits just under 1m from the ground.

This sign benefits from deemed consent under Class 2c of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007, however listed building consent is required to install this sign in this location.

Item 04 - Wall Mounted Directional Sign

Item 04 is similar to Item 03 and represents a like for like replacement of an existing sign on the Bedford Place elevation of the hotel. The sign will be finished in Premier Inn purple and is 400mm by 400mm.

Again, this this sign benefits from deemed consent under Class 2c of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007, however listed building consent is required to install this sign in this location.



Planning Policy

The Development plan applicable to this site consists of the Warwick District Local Plan 2011 – 2026 and the Royal Leamington Spa Neighbourhood Plan. The National Planning Policy Framework is also a material consideration to which appropriate weight should be given.

Warwick District Local Plan

There are no specific advertisement policies within this document, however **Policy BE1** seeks to ensure that development proposals engage good design principles including requirements to *‘reinforce or enhance the established urban character of streets, squares and other spaces’* and use *‘appropriate materials and details’*

Heritage issues are dealt with under the ‘Historic Environment’ section of the Local Plan, with policies **HE1** and **HE2** being relevant to this proposal. **Policy HE1** Designated Heritage Assets and their Setting states that *‘Where development would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm will be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use’* This is in line with national policy guidance

Policy HE2 is concerned with conservation areas and states that *‘Measures will be taken to restore or bring back into use areas that presently make a negative contribution to conservation areas.’*

Royal Leamington Spa Neighbourhood Plan

Policy RLS3 is concerned with conservation areas and states that proposals must demonstrate attention to *‘The proposed building type, style, materials and colours in relation to the character area in which it is located and its distinguishing features’* and *‘How the development interfaces with and respects the significance listed buildings and non-designated heritage assets, landmark buildings, classical set pieces, parks and gardens, watercourses and the canal.’*

Policy RLS16 is concerned with development proposals within the town centre and seeks to conserve and enhance the distinctive character of the area.

NPPF

Paragraph 136 provides guidance regarding signage and states *“advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts”*.

Section 16 of the NPPF is concerned with the conservation of the historic environment, it sets out at **Paragraph 194** that applicants are required to describe the significance of any heritage asset effected by proposals and that the level of detail should be appropriate to understand the assets importance and sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposals on the significance of the asset.



Paragraph 202 states that where a proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a heritage asset that harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

Planning Assessment

The principle of halo illuminated signage on the front elevation of this hotel is long established and is acceptable in both planning and heritage terms. The proposed scheme seeks to improve and simplify signage and provide a solution that is sympathetic to the host building and its surroundings, whilst promoting the branding principles of Premier Inn.

Premier Inn is a well-known and national brand based on continuity and reliability for its customers. In this regard, the consistency of branding and external signage is a highly significant and important part of the business.

Sign 01 is a replacement of the existing sign and it replicates this in terms of scale, design and illumination method. This application seeks only to update the sign in terms of its font and colour. This sign will remain the only Premier Inn signage on the front and main elevation of this hotel and as such its visibility is crucial.

The individual letter design of this sign, along with the removal of the usual logos, lessens the overall impact, ensuring that the design of this sign is entirely sympathetic to the host building and the wider surroundings. This is a bespoke sign, designed to be sympathetic to the unique surroundings of the Leamington Spa hotel.

There is no detrimental impact on the visual amenity of the area; the sign causes no threat to public safety and is entirely appropriate within its context and as such is wholly appropriate in planning terms.

Heritage Assessment

The Leamington Spa Town Centre Premier Inn forms part of the Grade II Listed 152-164 Parade and the whole site falls within the Leamington Spa Conservation Area. To comply with government guidance contained within the NPPF, as well as policies contained in the adopted Development Plan, it is necessary for the application to be supported by a heritage assessment that considers and assesses the impact of the proposed development on significance of the building and its setting; as well as the impacts on the conservation area. We consider the principle consideration to be the appropriateness of the proposed sign on the front elevation of the building, however the two directional signs on the rear elevations do require listed building consent.

Listed Building

The official list entry for 152-164, Parade describes the building as follows:

Terrace of 7 houses, now shops. Numbered right to left, described left to right. c1835 with later additions and alterations including mid C20 shop fronts and semi-circular portico to Regency Arcade and some rebuilding to



rear. Brick with painted stucco facades and Welsh slate roof. EXTERIOR: 4 storeys, 14 first-floor windows, 2 to each dwelling, extensions to rear. Remains of ground floor channelled rustication. First floor: Corinthian pilasters to end and 2 between each dwelling through first and second floors, dentil frieze, acanthus modillion cornice. Further plain pilasters above, cornice, blocking course, copings. First floor: 8 tall 6/9 sashes, six 12-pane French windows, all in plain reveals and with tooled surrounds, frieze, cornice. Second floor: 6/6 sashes throughout in tooled surrounds and with sills. Third floor: 3/6 sashes throughout in moulded surrounds, interrupt band. Ground floor: glazed shop fronts and portico to Nos. 152, 154 and 156 (Regency Arcade). INTERIOR: not inspected. HISTORICAL NOTE: the Parade was so-named in 1860. Originally called Lillington Lane, it was renamed Union Row c1809. The lower section was laid out c1810-1814 and extended towards Dormer Place c1835. Built as houses, hotels and lodging-houses, by 1850 many had become shops. (Cave LF: Royal Leamington Spa Its History and Development: Chichester: 1988-: 33, 36-37; Manning JC

It is necessary to assess the significance of the listed building in order to fully assess the harm inflicted upon it by the proposals. The NPPF defines significance as “ *value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. This interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.*”. Taking account of this we have identified that the heritage significance of 152-164, Parade is derived from its architectural features as well as its setting with the conservation area.

The original form of the building remains largely intact and despite the loss of the original residential use the 7 no. former dwellings can still be clearly identified. The mid-20th century shopfronts with associated corning and facias remain intact with the semi-circular portico, directly adjacent to the proposed sign providing a focal point. The cills, corning and other significant architectural features noted in the listing remain intact, visible and well preserved. The preservation of these architectural and historic features contributes to the significance of this heritage asset.

The sign proposed for the front elevation will not cause any harm to the significance of this listed building, which is derived from its architectural features, as it fits well into the facias of the building and enhances this feature of the building by assisting in it achieving its optimal use. This proposed sign has been designed to fit with the architectural features of the unique host building as well as the surrounding conservation area - it reflects surrounding signage and is similar in design, scale and position.

The proposed signage complies with government guidance contained in Chapter 16 of the NPPF as well as local development plan policy as no harm is inflicted upon the significance of this heritage asset.

Leamington Spa Conservation Area

The proposal site falls centrally within the Leamington Spa Conservation Area, which covers the town centre and as such houses many commercial and business uses. The Premier Inn hotels falls within Area 15a of the conservation area, the Lower Parade, which contains the Town Hall and the Regent Hotel, both of which are Grade II listed buildings. The area appraisal notes that there is a need to maintain strong control over shopfronts and signage.



The significance of this conservation area is derived from its architectural character and as well as its historical background as a commercial and shopping district. The wide streets and rendered regency buildings all add to the significance of this attractive and unique town centre. The Parade is characterised by classic terraces as well as the contrast between the Town Hall and the Regent Hotel. Further significance is derived from the retained use of the parade as a busy thoroughfare of the town.

The area is not subject to an area of special advertisement control order however, the conservation area appraisal notes the importance of 'restrained signage'. The design guide further notes that no logos will be permitted at fascia level and as such we do not propose one here, despite this being a standard part of the Premier Inn branding.

The proposed signage is entirely appropriate within the context of the surrounding conservation area, it mirrors surrounding signage and does not detract from the Regency architectural features of the host building nor does it adversely impact the features of the wider conservation area.

We consider that the installation of the proposed signage will not inflict harm on the significance of the conservation area and therefore the proposal is fully compliant with the tests set out within chapter 16 of the NPPF, specifically paragraph 202.

Conclusion

The proposed signs are proportionate in size and scale to the host building as well as the nature of Leamington Spa town centre. The individual letter sign will be located at fascia level and it not only fits well within the existing fascia and cornicing but the nature of the sign *enhances* this element of the building.

Noting the signage on surrounding buildings within the town centre it is clear that this has been heavily controlled by the Local Planning Authority and that the character of the Leamington Spa has been retained and enhanced as a result. The proposed signage is entirely fitting within this context and supports the enhancement of the heritage assets within this area.

Great care has been taken to design a proposal that complies with the very specific heritage policies and requirements of this historically sensitive location and as such this proposal fully complies with all relevant and applicable policy. The current signage has been in place since circa 2012 and is tired and in need of replacement, in this regard our client proposes a scheme that is historically sensitive yet within their branding principles.

The above assessment demonstrates that the proposed signage is not detrimental to either local amenity or public safety and as such it accords with both local and national planning policy. Furthermore, the scheme is acceptable from a heritage perspective as it has been demonstrated that it will not cause harm to the significance of the listed building or conservation area.



The applicant wishes to work closely with the Council on this proposal and as such, if you have any queries regarding the submission or require any additional information, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours faithfully



Vicky Harper MSc
Planner

