Expiry Date - 29/05/2023

Development Control – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/0418/23 **Recommendation – GRANT ADVERT CONSENT**

Site: **The Grand Victorian Hotel 27 Railway Approach Worthing West Sussex**

Proposal: **Hand signwritten lettering to cornice band externally illuminated by 3no trough lights, 4no internally illuminated menu boxes, and a new externally illuminated projecting sign (retrospective).**

Application Number: AWDM/0500/23 **Recommendation – GRANT CONSENT**

Site: **The Grand Victorian Hotel 27 Railway Approach Worthing West Sussex**

Proposal: **Application for Listed Building Consent for hand signwritten lettering to cornice band externally illuminated by 3no trough lights, 4no illuminated menu boxes, and a new externally illuminated projecting sign**

Date of site visit: 10.08.2023

Neighbours checked: Y

Additional neighbour notifications: N [Amended plans re-publicised by Site Notice.]

Site and Surroundings

The application site comprises The Railway Hotel (formerly The Grand Victorian), a recently refurbished public house/restaurant with letting rooms occupying a corner plot flanked by Oxford Road to the west and the Railway Approach to the north.

The building, carried out in an Edwardian 'Vernacular Revival' style is Listed Grade II. The north-westerly corner of the building is emphasised with an ornate 3 storey octagonal corner turret. There is a pub garden to the south of the building, and an outdoor seating area on the north side fronting Railway Approach. As part of the recent refurbishment works a previous UPVC conservatory fronting Oxford Road has been removed with the built-up base retained as a raised outdoor seating terrace.

The part single storey/part two storey eastern wing of the building (formerly a nightclub) has recently been converted into additional letting rooms as part of the comprehensive refurbishment of the building.

The building is described in the statutory listing as:-

WORTHING TQ 1403 RAILWAY APPROACH (east side) 753/17/10026 Chapmans II Includes: Chapmans, OXFORD ROAD Alternatively known as: Central Hotel, RAILWAY APPROACH. Hotel and public house. c1900 with some late C20 alterations and extensions to rear. Vernacular Revival style of red brick in English bond with timber-framed gables with plastered infill and tiled roof with tall brick chimneystacks. EXTERIOR: the principal feature is a 3-storey octagonal corner turret with ogee-shaped tiled dome with finial. Arched doorcase below into Public Bar. Remainder of 2 storeys and attics. Elevation to Station Approach has 4 gables, one projecting, with two single and two double doors and frosted glass to all windows on ground floor. Elevation to Oxford Road has one gable with timber-framing, 6-light window to second floor, 4-light window to first floor and 2 half-glazed doors and 2 windows all with cambered headed windows with stained glass fanlights with leaf decoration and frosted glass windows. Late C20 II 01- SEP-1997 conservatory to rear.

INTERIOR: public bar retains lincrusta ceiling, 2 Tuscan columns painted to represent marble, mahogany dado panelling, wooden partition with engraved glass panels, large wooden clock, tiled fireplace, bar fitment with round-headed arches and original counter with floor tiling in front of it. Staircase hall has well staircase with widely spaced balusters.
Listing NGR: TQ1452703318

To the north of the site lies the main entrance into Worthing rail station.

On the opposite side of Oxford Road is Abbey House, a large, 2-storey, detached Edwardian building in residential use.

To the south of the site is an end-of-terrace building (40 Oxford Road) and associated outbuildings (40B), in residential use. Beyond 40B to the east is a warehouse building (No.42) in use as a dog day care business.

To the east of the site is a private access road and beyond that the new 5-storey Teville Gate House HM Revenue office building.

The site is located within the Teville Gate Town Centre Character Area.

This report covers both the application for advertisement and listed building consent.

Proposal

Retrospective consent is sought for hand-signwritten 3D lettering applied to the blue-painted cornice band externally illuminated by 3no trough lights, 4no

internally illuminated menu boxes and an externally illuminated hanging sign above the entrance on the chamfered turreted corner.

The application has been amended since it was initially submitted.

Relevant Planning History:

AWDM/1983/22 Removal of UPVC conservatory additions with existing base retained and adapted to form external seating area enclosed by wrought iron railings, single-storey rear extension, new exterior doors onto raised platform with steps and ramp access to rear garden. Removal of existing glass/wrought iron canopies to North and Northwest entrances. Restoration of cut-glass windows. Removal of existing fire escape within North Elevation Courtyard and replacement with new galvanised spiral staircase; new planter and external lighting within courtyard. Erection of roofed fixed seating and timber pergola structures within the rear pub garden plus fixed seating booths and new fencing. Installation of 6no new lamp posts to the North and West perimeter of premises. Permitted and part implemented.

AWDM/1984/23 Application for Listed Building Consent for removal of UPVC conservatory additions with existing base retained and adapted to form external seating area enclosed by wrought iron railings, single-storey rear extension, new exterior doors onto raised platform with steps and ramp access to rear garden. Removal of existing glass/wrought iron canopies to North and Northwest entrances. Restoration of cut-glass windows. Removal of existing fire escape within North Elevation Courtyard and replacement with new galvanised spiral staircase; new planter and external lighting within courtyard. Erection of roofed fixed seating and timber pergola structures within the rear pub garden plus fixed seating booths and new fencing. Installation of 6no new lamp posts to the perimeter of premises. Internal Works involving removal of internal walls to kitchen and central lobby plus removal of raised floor areas, fixed seating, existing bar and toilet cubicles with revised internal layout to facilitate operational improvements to connect to both sides of pub, enhancement of toilets, kitchen and bar areas, restoration of level access to all areas and provision of new accessible toilet. Minor works to bedrooms above pub. Granted Consent and part implemented.

AWDM/0248/23 Conversion of former nightclub to provide 17 new hotel rooms at ground and first-floor level with associated internal and external alterations, new windows and door to east and west elevations and replacement double doors to north elevation. Permitted and implemented.

AWDM/0249/23 Listed Building Consent for removal of old toilet block to 1st floor, removal of nightclub interior to include bar, staircase and ceilings. Construction of 17 new hotel rooms with associated internal and external alterations, new windows and door to east and west elevations and replacement double doors to north elevation. Granted Consent and implemented.

Consultations:

Adur and Worthing Councils

Conservation Architect:

"The fact that our advice has been disregarded is frustrating. However, although the blue band does visibly change the perception of the ornate string course, it has been well executed and being reversible may be difficult to justify enforcement action. Interestingly, being white, the impact of the trough lighting is diminished in the photographs. Assuming we have avoided the cable lighting previously proposed, now we are only considering trough lights over the 2 entrances. These are of temporary nature and again easily reversed in the future."

Representations: None received.

Relevant Planning Policies

Worthing Local Plan policies (WBC 2023): DM5, DM6, DM13, DM23, DM24
National Planning Policy Framework (HCLG 2023)
National Planning Practice Guidance

Planning Assessment

Comprehensive refurbishment works to revitalise this long-established public house and hotel have recently been completed with a fully refurbished interior, expanded hotel accommodation, removal of the above-mentioned unsympathetic modern conservatory addition, and tidying up of the rear garden (although the approved fixed booth seating and pergola structure have not been implemented).

The signage proposals originally submitted were not supported and alternative proposals were the subject of discussions with officers. The current signage was installed in August 2023 without approval and the applications have subsequently been amended to largely reflect the signage as installed.

The key considerations are the effects of the signage on amenity and public safety, and on the historic character and appearance of the listed building including its setting and features of special architectural importance.

Visual Amenity and Heritage

Paragraph 136 of the NPPF notes that the quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed.

Paragraphs 199 states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any

potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

The supporting text to adopted Local Plan Policy DM6 states that signage should be sensitively designed to respect the character of the area and the building on which it is located with careful consideration given to the suitability of any illumination.

Policy DM24 states that listed building consent will only be granted provided that the appearance, significance, or historic character of the Listed Building is not adversely affected.

The decorative curved cornice band in-between the ground and first-floor of the building wraps around the north, west and part of the southern elevation of the building. Until recently it was off-white in colour, matching the decorative stone surrounds and framing of the ground and first-floor windows, and upper part of the distinctive corner turret. The curved part of the band has been painted a deep ‘Mediterranean’ blue with 3D hand-painted lettering applied in gold and white. The decorative horizontal mouldings above and below the curved band have been retained in off-site. The lettering states ‘The Railway Hotel’ above the entrance on the north elevation, the chamfered entrance on the corner and centred above the main arched window on the west elevation. 3no white trough lights have been fixed above the 3no ‘The Railway Hotel’ signs. Each trough light has 4no 300mm long fixing arms with fixing plates attached to the upper part of the cornice just below the moulding.

The company name ‘Portobello’ including logo is sign-written (in a smaller font) centred above 2no arched windows on the north elevation and 1no smaller arched window on the west elevation.

There is no lettering on the painted cornice band on the south elevation.

As noted by the Council’s Conservation Architect, painting the cornice band a dark contrasting colour has visibly altered the perception of this architectural feature of the building. However it has been well-executed and the hand-painted sign-writing is relatively discreet in terms of the amount and size of lettering. The 3no white trough lights are relatively slender and their width in each case is limited to the extent of the wording below. The signage is respectful of the proportions of this important architectural feature and the overall effect is not overtly prominent, nor are the light fixings unduly intrusive. As noted by the Conservation Architect, the painting and the light fixings could easily be reversed.

The externally illuminated ‘cut out’ hanging pictorial sign is 1.2 m wide and 2.2m high overall (including the decorative bracket). Trough lights (1.2m wide) are fixed on either side of the bracket. It has been installed just below the cill of the second-floor window on the chamfered corner turret. It replaces applied individual letters ‘GRAND VICTORIAN HOTEL’ in a similar position and utilises the same fixing bars. The pictorial flag sign is a traditional style of ‘pub’ sign and is in keeping with the character and proportions of the building.

4no internally illuminated brass menu boxes (0.51m x 0.4m) have been installed, 2no on either side of the main entrance doors. These replace similar menu boxes previously in place at both entrances. However, unlike the previous menu boxes, the 2no boxes at the entrance on the chamfered corner have been fixed so that they impinge on the decorative stone door surround. A condition is suggested requiring these boxes to be re-positioned onto the adjacent brickwork pier (as before) within 2 months of the decision.

Subject to the above re-positioning, the signage as installed as not detracted from the important historic character and features of the building, or from the visual amenity of the area.

Public Safety

The flag sign is positioned 6m above the public highway at the chamfered corner of the building, and the trough light positioned above this entrance is 4m above the public highway. As such, neither raises any public safety concern or hazard.

Recommendation

AWDM/0418/23

GRANT CONSENT

Subject to Conditions:-

1-6 Standard conditions
7. Approved plans
8. Within 2 months re-position menu boxes.

AWDM/0500/23

GRANT CONSENT

Subject to Conditions:-

1. Approved plans
2. Within 2 months re-position menu boxes.
3. Damage made good

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation? N

Case Officer: Jo Morin Date: 10.10.2023

Authorised by: Gary Peck Date: 10 October 2023