watts planning

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

ON BEHALF OF ACCOR HOTEL GROUP

PLANNING APPLICATION FOR NEW SHOP FRONTAGE

SITE AT ibis HOTEL, PORTLAND STREET, MANCHESTER, M1 4GX

Watts Planning
Spinners House (Suite 3)
Bachelor Lane
Leeds
LS18 5NF

For more information please contact:
Andy Watts – Director
wattsplanning@live.co.uk

1 PROPOSAL

1.1 This Planning, Design & Access Statement is submitted in support and as a formal part of this planning application on behalf of Accor Hotel Group (the 'Applicant') for new shop frontage at ibis Hotel, 96 Portland Street, Manchester (the 'site').

1.2 The application site comprises an attractive contemporary five storey red brick hotel building with ground floor commercial units.



1.3 As part of general internal refurbishments a new shop frontage is proposed to provide a customer coffee bar and bar entrance independent of the main hotel entrance and lobby. Both the new customer entrance and adjoining display windows will be fitted with clear glazing which will effectively open-up the appearance of the unit for the benefit of customers and the active street scene façade.

1.4 The proposed shop frontage will positively enhance the George Street Conservation Area and character and appearance of Portland Street.

1.5 It is considered that the proposed frontage alterations are compliant with objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF'), Core Strategy and relevant 'saved' Manchester Unitary Development Plan ('UDP') policies.

2 APPLICATION SITE AND 'SIGNIFICANCE'

2.1 The application site premises the ibis Hotel is a contemporary red brick constructed 5 storey hotel building situated within and at edge of the George Street Conservation Area; and identified Heritage Asset.

2.2 The proposed new shop frontage relates to the existing ground floor coffee bar use of the building adjoining the hotel reception and lobby.

2.3 In relation to the proposed planning application the 'significance' of the conservation area relates to the high quality of mixed architectural design where traditional buildings often of architectural antiquity sit comfortably alongside more striking examples of contemporary design (as shown below).



2.4 Where the application site building fronts Portland Street it effectively forms a substantial terrace with adjoining buildings of similar scale although of mixed architectural styles all providing ground floor; street level active commercial uses. The presence of the ground floor commercial uses along Portland Street of both traditional and modern frontages and their associated signage also forms an integral part of the conservation area setting and its 'significance'.

2.5 The proposed high quality new frontage is bespoke designed to 'fit' within the established contemporary façade comprising open floor-to-ceiling full clear glazed display windows without competing with or detracting from the architectural integrity of surrounding Listed Buildings or the conservation area street scene.

2.6 The proposed coffee bar frontage is subtle, well related to the architectural form of the building and whilst providing a contemporary appearance sits comfortably within the local context of the city centre location and as such will continue to maintain and preserve the identified 'significance' without harm to either setting or appearance.

2.7 It is considered the use of proposed clear glazing will positively enhance the appearance of the ground floor.

3 COMPLIANCE WITH PRIMARY PLANNING LEGISLATION

3.1 The applicant cites Section 38 of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 ("PCPA") in favour of the development. There will be no demonstrable harm to important interests, more particularly those relating to the character and appearance of the host property and identified 'significance' of the conservation area.

4 COMPLIANCE WITH NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

4.1 The proposal supports the Government's principal objective of delivering sustainable development through the planning system.

4.2 The Government's main objective for prosperous growth is sustainable economic development. To achieve this, the Government aims to build prosperous communities by improving the economic performance of cities, towns, regions, sub-regions and local areas. They also aim to promote the vitality and viability of town and other centre uses as important places for communities. To do this the Government wants to improve competition between commercial uses and enhanced consumer choice.

4.3 The proposed enhanced coffee bar and bar facilities will have a positive impact on the vitality and vibrancy of the street scene. The enhanced use will increase local employment opportunities and provide additional competition in the central area.

4.4 In order to plan positively to enhance the sustainability and vitality of local centres in accordance with national planning guidance objectives LPAs should encourage a wide range of complementary uses which appeal to a wide range of age and social groups.

4.5 The proposal provides high quality inclusive and integrated development that makes a positive contribution to making places better for people. The proposed scheme is appropriate to its context and will add to the character and quality of the area and the way it functions.

5 DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICY

5.1 The site is situated within the identified city centre area and George Street Conservation Area.

5.2 The application site is not located in either a Primary or Secondary Retail Frontage as identified in the adopted Core Strategy or the 'saved' UDP Proposals Map.

5.3 The proposed enhanced coffee shop facilities are compliant with Core Strategy Policy C10 where the use will contribute to the vibrant night time economy of Portland Street but will also provide an active street use during day time opening hours. The proposal will not adversely impact on the amenity of residents in the immediate locality and there will be no adverse cumulative impact from increased usage.

5.4 The proposed alterations will ensure the continued maintenance and positive enhancement of the Heritage Asset in accordance with Core Strategy policy CC9.

5.5 Core Strategy policy EN3 positively supports the re-use of heritage assets where their use is consistent with the significance of the heritage asset.

6 DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 The proposed frontage alterations and new signage (as part of a separate Advertisement Consent application) will positively enhance the appearance of the host property and the setting of this part of the George Street Conservation Area street scene.

6.2 The proposed frontage alterations including clear glazing will significantly contribute to the vibrant street scene.

6.3 All proposed alterations will be carried out without harm to the character or external appearance of the host building.

6.4 At present the dark tinted glazing provides a 'dead' frontage with little aspect to the public realm. The alterations will create a positive street scene feature and will compliment the vibrancy of the city centre.

7 ACCESS CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 The new entrance will provide a level access that allows ease of access to customers and staff with physical disabilities, to wheel chair and push chair users. The proposed shop front alterations and associated internal changes will be DDA and Building Regulation compliant.

7.2 The site lies in a highly sustainable urban area with exceptional public transport links via bus and train as well as being conveniently accessible by walking from the surrounding residential areas. This provides real alternatives to reliance on car travel to the site, in accordance with principal sustainability objectives of the NPPF.

7.3 Notwithstanding the availability of alternative means of public transport there are a number of off-street car parks in the immediate locality and a limited number of pay-and-display parking bays along Faulkner Street.

8 CONCLUSION

8.1 The proposed frontage alterations will compliment and contribute to the commercial mix of uses in the locality whilst enhancing the vitality and viability of Portland Street.

8.2 The proposed alterations are modest and commensurate with the appearance and setting of the host property and the mixed character evident within this part of the George Street Conservation Area street scene.

I hope this information is of assistance, however should you require further details or wish to discuss matters prior to determination of the application please do not hesitate to contact me on 07970 711548.