

Our Ref: VH/KN0021/23

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Brandon House, King Street, Knutsford,
Cheshire WA16 6DX
Tel: 01565 757500
Email: knutsford@walsingplan.co.uk
Web: www.walsinghamplanning.co.uk

Manchester City Council
Planning Department
PO Box 532
Manchester
M60 2LA

Dear Sir / Madam,

Premier Inn Hotel 112-114 Portland Street M1 4WB
Application for Advertisement Consent and Listed Building Consent
Advert Consent Planning Portal Reference PP-12119902
Listed Building Consent Planning Portal Reference PP-12119921

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

Specifically, the application proposes:

“A scheme of illuminated signage.”

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. 164415 Rev. E

This letter forms part of the applications and should be read in support of the applications for both Listed Building and Advertisement Consent.

Background

The existing signs have been in place since circa 2008 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 part of the application building is Grade II Listed and the entire site falls within the George Street Conservation Area.



Site and Surrounds

These applications relate to the Premier Inn hotel at 112 -114 Portland Street Manchester. This is a city centre location and the hotel is situated at the junction of Portland Street and Oxford Street, both of which are busy non pedestrianised routes through the city. The hotel sits at the corner of this busy junction and extends from Portland Street, round to Oxford Street with the entrance to the hotel sitting on Portland Street. The façade of the building on Portland Street is Grade II Listed whilst the remainder of the building is of modern construction,

The hotel forms part of 'The Circus' development and is one of a number of occupiers. The hotel takes up a large proportion of the building above ground level. Other occupiers of the building include a Wetherspoons pub, a casino and a retail outlet. The wider area is characterised by typical city centre activities and Uses including shops, restaurants and fast food outlets.

Planning History

The following planning history is considered relevant to this proposal

- **095866/LO/2011/C2** Listed Building Consent to display two advertisements. Approved 2011
- **094936/AO/2010/C2** One externally illuminated entrance sign and one illuminated promotional sign. Approved 2011
- **087693/LO/2008/C2** Listed Building Consent to display advertisements Approved 2008
- **086731/AO/2008/C2** Internally illuminated individual lettered fascia sign and internal signage behind glazing and externally illuminated projecting sign Approved 2008
- **074333/LO/2004/C2** Listed Building Consent for signage Approved 2005
- **073115/AO/2004/C2** Internally illuminated individual lettered fascia sign and projecting sign. Approved 2005

Proposal

This proposal seeks to provide clear and high-quality signage in line 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 Portland Street 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.



Consent is sought for 4. no signs to be located on the Portland Street and Oxford Street elevations of the hotel. The proposed signs are all internally illuminated and are broadly similar to the existing signs. The scheme has been designed as part of the wider Premier Inn brand and follows its established and high-quality principles.

Items 01 and 02 Internally illuminated letter and roundel signs

These signs are identical, and both will be positioned 10.6 metres above ground level. The individual letters are positioned on runner bars and are a maximum of 507mm in height, they will be illuminated in white. The roundel will be Premier Inn purple showing the star and moon logo. Both elements are internally illuminated and overall, the sign will measure 4.4 metres in width and 831 mm in height. The roundel will be constructed with powder coated aluminium and the letters will be internally illuminated white acrylic.

Item 03 – Internally illuminated projecting aluminium sign.

This sign is of steel frame construction with fret cut aluminium cladding which will be powder coated in Premier Inn purple. The sign is 3 metres in height, 0.8 metres in width and will be 220 mm in depth. It will sit circa 6 metres from the ground and is internally illuminated.

Item 04 – Aluminium Fascia Sign

This sign will sit above the main entrance to the hotel and is required in order to identify the entrance, it has been designed to fit the existing aluminium panel above the door. The sign is internally illuminated and will be constructed of aluminium and powder coated in Premier Inn purple.

Planning Policy

The Development plan applicable to this site consists of the adopted Core Strategy 2012-2027 and saved policies from the Unitary Development Plan. The National Planning Policy Framework is also material considerations to which appropriate weight should be given.

Core Strategy Development Plan Document 2012

Policy CC 4 ‘Visitors - Tourism, Culture and Leisure’ This policy seeks to improve and support leisure and tourism within Manchester and states that *‘proposals to improve the appearance, use and accessibility of all cultural and visitor attractions and associated facilities will be supported’*

Policy CC 9 ‘Design and Heritage’ This policy seeks to preserve and enhance the heritage assets within the city and states that *‘Development in Manchester City Centre should preserve or enhance the heritage assets that have been identified, including listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled ancient monuments.’*



Extant Unitary Development Policies

Policy 14 *Shop Fronts and Related Signs*. This policy states that *'the Council will seek to ensure that proposals are in keeping with the character of the building and adjoining buildings, of adjoining shopfronts, where appropriate, and of the area within which the premises are located.'*

Policy 15 *'Advertisements, Hoardings and Posters'* this policy reflects the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 and states that *applications for advertisements be considered only in the interests of amenity and public safety*. It is then concerned with advertising hoardings and posters, neither of which are relevant to this application.

Policy 18 *'Conservation Areas'* This policy sets out the guidance relating to conservation areas within the city and states that the LPA will carefully consider the effect of signs and advertisements.

Policy 19 *'Listed Buildings'* this policy states that *'the Council will have regard to the desirability of securing the retention, restoration, maintenance and continued use of such buildings and to protecting their general setting*.

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 illuminated signage at 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 in keeping with 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 part of the business.



Signs 01 and 02 are identical and will be positioned at the same height on both the Portland Street and Oxford Street elevations. Sign 02 is a direct replacement of an existing sign and sign 01 will be a new sign on this elevation.

Sign 01 is proposed in order to give the hotel additional presence on Oxford Street. There is currently no Premier Inn branding on this elevation and therefore the public are not alerted to the existence of the hotel from this view. The sign has been chosen specifically to reflect the existing Portland Street sign and provide visual and brand continuity. The principle for both of these signs is established by the existing high-level sign on Portland Street, this application seeks only to update and replicate this.

Signs 03 and 04 will be positioned on the Listed element of the building and will provide the Portland Street elevation with a streamlined aesthetic and will reduce visual clutter. As part of this upgrade the existing projecting sign, vinyl signage within the window and the poster box sign will all be removed and replaced by a single projecting sign and a small fascia sign above the doorway. Both of these signs are internally illuminated and high quality. They do not have a detrimental impact on the visual amenity of the area and are entirely appropriate and in keeping with the surrounding area.

Heritage Assessment

Part of the application building is Grade II Listed and the whole site falls within the George Street Conservation Area. In order to comply with government guidance contained in 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.

Listed Building

The official list entry for 110-114 Portland Street describes the building as follows:

Warehousing (probably textiles or clothing), now shop and offices. 1880, by Charles Heathcote; altered. Sandstone ashlar ground floor, red brick with sandstone dressings above, slate roof. Irregular trapeziform plan. Romanesque style. Three storeys with basement and attic, 5 bays, symmetrical above ground floor; with cornice to ground floor, brick pilasters and stone sill-bands to both upper floors, stone eaves cornice on brick corbel table, and shallow 3-bay flat-roofed attic dormer. Round-headed doorway to left, shouldered waggon entry to right, and windows and doorways with rounded corners between these; windows of 1:2:2:2:1 lights on both upper floors, those in the centre at 1st floor set in round-headed arches and with round-headed lights, brick pilasters and moulded stone imposts, and those in the flanking bays with segmental open pediments; those in the centre at 2nd floor with square-headed lights, set-in square pilasters and brick corbel tables, and those in the flanking bays segmental-headed with corniced brick architraves. Unusual dormer with 3 groups of 3 small round-headed windows and stone cornice. All these windows sashed without glazing bars. Rear and interior not inspected. Small building of boldly-modelled mid-Victorian character. Forms group with No.106 and No.108 to right (q.v.) and Nos 116 (etc) to 126 to left.



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 110 – 114 Portland Street is derived from its architectural features as well as its setting with the Conservation Area.

The original form of the building remains intact and represents a good example of a nineteenth century urban commercial building. The bays, cills, cornicing 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 proposed signage will not cause any harm to the significance of this Listed building as it is derived from its architectural features. These features will not be impacted by the installation of this simple signage scheme that has been designed to fit with surroundings and fit with the architectural features of the host building.

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.

George Street Conservation Area

The proposal site sits on the edge of the George Street Conservation Area, which is a busy commercial district of Manchester city centre. As well as being home to the City’s China Town the area contains many shops, restaurants as well as some residential buildings.

The significance of this Conservation Area is derived from its architectural features as well as its historical background as a commercial district. The appraisal notes that much of the significance of the area comes from its regular grid pattern of streets established in Georgian times as well as the Georgian architecture and its associated scale.

The appraisal specifically mentions signage and notes that the commercial nature of the area means that there is a demand for illuminated signage. The conservation area appraisal states that *signs should be designed and located so as not to compete with the architectural details of buildings* and it further notes that care should be taken over the design and positioning of signs.

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 of an appropriate scale and are proportionate in size and scale to the hotel. They have been specifically designed to bring the hotel signage up to date with current Premier Inn branding and are required in order to keep the hotel up to date. The current signage has been in place since circa 2008 and is therefore tired and in need of replacement.

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 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

vicky.harper@walsingplan.co.uk

