

Planning Committee: 02 August 2006

Item Number:

Application No: W 06 / 0995

Registration Date: 15/06/06

Town/Parish Council: Leamington Spa

Expiry Date: 10/08/06

Case Officer: Rob Young

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120 Parade, Leamington Spa, CV32 4AQ

Display of externally illuminated fascia lettering (retrospective application) FOR
Enigma Retail Ltd

This application is being presented to Committee in order to request that enforcement action be taken.

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

Town Council: Object. (1) Given the retrospective nature of the application it is disappointing that no photographic evidence was included with the application. (2) The application does not complement the street scene.

RELEVANT POLICIES

- (DW) ENV3 - Development Principles (Warwick District Local Plan 1995)
- (DW) ENV6 - Protection and Enhancement of Conservation Areas (Warwick District Local Plan 1995)
- (DW) ENV8 - New Development within Conservation Areas (Warwick District Local Plan 1995)
- (DW) ENV11 - Retention of Listed Buildings (Warwick District Local Plan 1995)
- (DW) ENV20 - Advertising Control (Warwick District Local Plan 1995)
- DP1 - Layout and Design (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011 Revised Deposit Version)
- DAP6 - Protection of Listed Buildings (Warwick District 1996 - 2011 Revised Deposit Version)
- DAP10 - Protection of Conservation Areas (Warwick District 1996 - 2011 Revised Deposit Version)
- Supplementary Planning Guidance - Shopfronts and Advertisements in Leamington Spa.

PLANNING HISTORY

There have been a large number of previous applications relating to signage at the application premises. The most recent proposals were in 1995, when advertisement consent was granted for “display of internally illuminated fascia lettering” (Ref. W951103). This related to the halo-illuminated lettering that was in place before the current signage was installed.

KEY ISSUES

The Site and its Location

The application relates to a four storey Grade II Listed Building situated on the western side of Parade. The building is within a terrace of similar properties situated within the Leamington Spa Conservation Area. The existing fascia signage replaced individual halo-illuminated lettering fixed to a timber fascia.

Details of the Development

This is a retrospective application for the retention of the existing fascia signage on the premises. The sign comprises 300mm high white individual lettering fixed to a red perspex fascia. The lettering is externally illuminated by 4 separate trough lights fixed above the fascia.

Assessment

I consider that the main issue relevant to the consideration of this application is as follows:

- the impact of the signs on the character and appearance of the Listed Building and the Conservation Area.

Impact on character and appearance of Listed Building and Conservation Area

In my view the signage that has been installed causes unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the Listed Building and the Conservation Area. The external trough lights and perspex fascia represent uncompromising modern features that jar with the traditional appearance of the building and adjacent properties. Furthermore, the lettering appears unduly bulky due to the thickness of projection from the fascia. The lettering approved in 1995 was of a similar thickness, but that was justified by the need to accommodate halo illumination, which is not a justification for the existing externally illuminated lettering.

The signage would be wholly at odds with the traditional appearance of the shopfront and the established pattern of signage in this part of the Conservation Area, which is characterised by the use of individual lettering of limited depth with halo illumination or discrete pelmet illumination.

RECOMMENDATION

1. REFUSE, for the reason stated below.
2. AUTHORISE prosecution action under the advertisement regulations to require the removal of the fascia sign, including the individual letters, 4 trough lights and perspex fascia.

REFUSAL REASONS

- 1 Policy (DW) ENV3 of Warwick District Local Plan 1995 requires all development proposals to achieve a high standard of design, having regard

to local styles, materials, the character of the surrounding area and of adjacent buildings, whilst Policy (DW) ENV6 states that Conservation Areas in the District will be protected from development which would have a detrimental effect upon their character or appearance. In addition, Policy (DW) ENV8 requires that within Conservation Areas, development proposals will be required to achieve a high standard of design appropriate to the historic and special architectural character of the area whilst Policy (DW) ENV11 states that applications to alter a Listed Building in such a way as to adversely affect its character will normally be refused. These are reflected in Policy DP1 of the emerging Warwick District Local Plan 1996-2011 (Revised Deposit Version) which requires all development proposals to make a positive contribution to the character and the quality of its environment through good layout and design, Policy DAP6 which states that development will not be permitted which has an unacceptable adverse impact on a Listed Building, and Policy DAP10 which requires that development proposals protect and enhance the historic quality, character and appearance of Conservation Areas.

The District Council has also produced Planning Guidance on shopfronts and advertisements in Leamington Spa.

The application relates to a Grade II Listed Building within the Conservation Area on the main shopping street within the Town Centre. Within such areas particular care is taken for the enhancement and preservation of the character and appearance of buildings and the street scene generally. In the opinion of the District Planning Authority the signage is wholly inappropriate by reason of the use of a perspex fascia, exposed light fittings and bulky lettering, which gives the signage an uncompromising modern and technical appearance which is wholly at odds with the traditional appearance of the shopfront and the established pattern of signage in this part of the Conservation Area, which is characterised by the use of individual lettering of limited depth with halo illumination or discrete pelmet illumination.

It is considered therefore that this signage unacceptably jars with the particular character and appearance of this building and the Conservation Area generally and hence is contrary to the aforementioned policies and adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance.
