

Application No: W 11 / 1144

Town/Parish Council: Leamington Spa
Case Officer: Sunita Burke

Registration Date: 20/09/11

Expiry Date: 15/11/11

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**Underpass at Leamington Spa Railway Station, Old Warwick Road,
Leamington Spa, CV31 3NS**

Display of 16no. marine ply boards on batons onto both sides of the Leamington Railway Station underpass, featuring figures and scenes of historical interest in hillograph style. FOR Network Rail Infrastructure

This application is being presented to Committee as Warwick District Council have submitted the application on behalf of the landowner.

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

Royal Leamington Spa Town Council: No objection was raised and the comment was made that the proposed works would improve the location.

Conservation: This application is for applied panels which are to be decorated and fixed to the underpass between Leamington Station and the access from Station Approach.

"I have been part of the working party considering this proposal which will significantly impact on the underpass and will improve it greatly as a public thoroughfare. I consider it to be completely acceptable, subject to full details of each panel in terms of artwork being submitted. It is also important that panels have some resistance to vandalism, particularly in terms of fixings. The panels will be wholly within the tunnel and will not be expressed on the external faces of the tunnel and therefore the impact will be wholly within the underpass of the listed building. I therefore consider this will be an improvement and an additional enhancement for people arriving at Leamington Station".

CAAF: No objection

"This was considered an improvement to the conservation area, however it was pointed out that measures should be taken to ensure that the panels are not vandalised".

RELEVANT POLICIES

- DAP4 - Protection of Listed Buildings (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011)
- DP1 - Layout and Design (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011)
- DP2 - Amenity (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011)
- DAP7 - Restoration of Listed Buildings (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011)

PLANNING HISTORY

No relevant planning history.

KEY ISSUES

The Site and its Location

The application site lies within the Leamington Spa Railway Station. It is a pedestrian subway that connects the two streets under the railway tracks providing access between the front of the Leamington Spa Railway Station and the car park on Station Road. This underpass is owned by Network Rail Ltd. Warwick District Council maintain the footpath that runs along the length of the underpass and Warwickshire County Council maintain the lighting in the underpass. Further, CCTV is installed, operated and maintained by Chiltern Railways.

The condition of the subway/underpass is currently considered as poor and there are visible signs of damage to the property by graffiti, overgrown shrubs and general deterioration. This proposal is submitted by Warwick District Council on behalf of Network Rail.

Details of the Development

The application is for advertisement consent for the installation of sixteen non-illuminated murals along the length of the underpass at Leamington Spa Railway Station. The proposal is to paint the walls of the underpass in a bright, neutral colour before the murals are fixed to the wall. These murals would be painted on marine ply, measuring 8 feet (2.4 metres) in height and 4 feet (1.2 metres) in width, which would be fixed on to wall mounted batons along the underpass. The aim of the proposal is to benefit the area by creating a feature within the underpass that will both enhance the structure and reduce the opportunities for small scale criminal damage i.e. graffiti.

Assessment

The main issue relevant to the consideration of this application is the visual impact of the underpass in the public realm.

The proposed environmental improvements to the underpass have been as a result of a multi agency project to improve the local environmental quality at the front and rear of Leamington Spa Railway Station.

The advertisement boards would contain murals that depict scenes of historical interest as seen through a railway carriage window in a lithographic style. It would improve the appearance of the area by creating an interest to the users of the underpass and engagement with the murals. This style of mural paintings has been implemented at Rugby Canal, which has been successful in addressing the concerns of criminal damage to public property.

To ensure protection of the murals against vandalism, they would be coated with a clear sacrificial coating to allow street cleaning operatives to quickly and conveniently remove any graffiti that the murals may be subject to over time.

Further, as the murals are mounted on batons there would be a minimal impact on the underpass structure and could also, be removed at a short notice if required. The design of the fixtures is modern and easy to use without any damage to the structure of the underpass.

In conclusion the proposed development to install murals in the underpass at Leamington Spa Railway Station would improve the appearance of the underpass, enhance the pedestrian walkway, and engage in the history of the area through the depictions on the murals. As such, the proposed advertisements are considered to comply with policies DP1, DP2, DAP4 and DAP7 of the Warwick District Council Local Plan 1996 – 2011.

RECOMMENDATION

GRANT with standard advertisement conditions as required by the Advert Regulations, and the following condition

CONDITION

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the details shown on the application form, site location plan and approved images of murals and specification contained therein, submitted on 22 Aug 2011 unless first agreed otherwise in writing by the District Planning Authority. **REASON** : For the avoidance of doubt and to secure a satisfactory form of development in accordance with Policies DP1 and DP2 of the Warwick District Local Plan 1996-2011.

INFORMATIVES

For the purposes of Article 31 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010, the following reason(s) for the Council's decision are summarised below:

In the opinion of the District Planning Authority, the proposed development does not adversely affect the historic integrity, character or setting of the listed building, is of an acceptable standard of design and detailing and preserves the character and appearance of the Conservation Area within which the property is situated. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with the policies listed.
