The Planning Inspectorate
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Bristol
BS1 6PN

Our ref: DC/26/0746
Your ref: APP/6016661
Email: Sam.Nye@horsham.gov.uk

Dear Sir/Madam,

6016661 – The Kings Head, 40 High Street, Billingshurst, RH14 9NY

This document is submitted on behalf of Horsham District Council in respect of the above appeal. The Local Planning Authority would refer the Inspector to the Delegated Report, the reasons for refusal (as per the delegated report) outlined below and the Council's response to the appellants statement of case also detailed below. The Council has included reason for refusal for both the Listed Building Consent and advertisement consent applications below for ease of reference.

Reasons for Refusal - DC/26/0746 (Listed Building Consent):

1. *The internally illuminated sign, by reason of its illumination and siting, prevents an ability to appreciate the architectural features as intended, and results in harm to the special interest of the Grade II Listed Building. The illuminated sign fails to respect the architectural style and character of the host building, and results in adverse harm to the architectural interest of the designated heritage asset, contrary to Policy 34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).*

Reasons for Refusal - DC/26/0579 (Application to Display Adverts):

1. *The advertisement, by reason of its illumination and siting would appear visually intrusive and would fail to respond positively to the character of the Conservation Area, causing undue harm to the visual amenity of the area. The visual impact of the illuminated sign prevents an ability to appreciate the architectural features as intended, and results in harm to the special interest of the Grade II Listed Building. The illuminated sign fails to respect the architectural style and character of the host building, and results in adverse harm to the architectural interest of the designated heritage asset, and to the visual amenity of the area, contrary to Policy 14, 32, 33, 34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015).*

Council's Emerging Local Plan

The council's Local Plan is currently at examination, where the Inspector's letter dated 30.10.2026 concludes that the plan is sound, subject to the proposed main modifications and the limited number of further changes discussed within the letter. The final report from the Inspector is anticipated to be received in January 2027, where changes to the draft Schedule of Main Modifications will need to be published for consultation. Given this letter and the status

of the Local Plan, the policies contained within the Horsham District Local Plan 2023-2040 (HDLP) are considered to be of significant weight and therefore form part of the council's statement. The Appendices accompanying this statement outlines the Emerging Local Plan policies in full, however, the polices of note are summarised below.

Policy 19, Development Quality, details that high-quality and inclusive design for all development in the district will be required based on a clear understanding of the local, physical, social, economic, environmental and policy context. In particular, development will be supported provided that it meets a set criterion, which in part includes:

- It provides an attractive, functional, accessible, safe and adaptable environment in accordance with the principles of Council endorsed Design Codes and Guides, Building for a Healthy Life design toolkit, the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code, or any future updates (1)
- It complements and responds to locally distinctive characters and heritage of the surrounding area (including building types, architectural styles, materials, detailing and colour. In appropriate locations where context permits, contemporary architecture can be considered (3)
- It contributes a sense of place both in the buildings and spaces themselves, having consideration to the built historic environment and townscape, and in the way they integrate with their structural surroundings and the landscape in which they sit (4)

Policy 20, Development Principles, details that in order to conserve and enhance the natural and built environment, and deliver beautiful and sustainable buildings and places, proposal for development will be supported provided it meets a set criterion. This criterion includes the following:

- Is designed to avoid unacceptable harm to the amenity of existing and future occupiers or users of nearby property and land, for example due to overlooking, over dominance or overshadowing, light pollution, traffic generation, and general activity, noise, odour and/or vibration, and having regard to the sensitivities/impact of surrounding development (3).
- Ensures that the scale, massing and appearance of the development is of a high standard of design and layout and relates sympathetically with the built surroundings, landscape, open spaces and routes within and adjoining the site, including any impact on the skyline and important views (4)
- Ensures that it is locally distinctive in character, respects and responds to the character of the surrounding area (including the overall setting, townscape features, views and green corridors) and, where available and applicable, takes account of the guidance in relevant Council endorsed Supplementary Planning Documents, Design Statements, Character Assessments and/or masterplans (5)
- Uses high standards of building materials, finishes and landscaping and demonstrates sustainable use of resources in design and construction, incorporating best practice in resource management, energy efficiency and climate change adaption (6)

Policy 21, Heritage Assets and Managing Change within the Historic Environment, details the following:

1. The Council will preserve and enhance its historic environment through positive management of development affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets, and their settings. Applications for such development will only be supported if meet a set criterion.

2. Proposals which affect a heritage asset, or the setting of a heritage asset, will only be supported where accompanied by a Heritage Statement.
3. Proposals which would cause substantial harm to, or loss of, a heritage asset will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial public benefits gained would outweigh the substantial harm or total loss of the asset and that any replacement scheme makes an equal contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Applicants must show an understanding of the significance of the heritage asset to be lost, either wholly or in part, and demonstrate how the heritage asset has been recorded.
4. Proposals which would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the heritage asset should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal and will only be supported where public benefit is considered to outweigh the harm.

Policy 22, Shop Fronts and Advertisements, details the following:

1. Applications for new, replacement and temporary shop fronts, including fascias, will be supported where the proposal respects the architectural style, character and form of the buildings or location of which they form a part, including appropriate use of materials, colour and illuminations.
2. Within Conservation Areas or on Listed Buildings or other designated heritage assets, proposals will be expected to retain an existing traditional shop front and/or features of architectural or historic interest, through retention or restoration. This will include the use of traditional materials or high-quality substitutes, traditionally painted fascias and hanging signs with muted colours. Externally illuminated signs must be discreet and appropriate to their context.
3. Advertisements, including interactive advertisements, hoardings, illumination of hoardings and illuminated fascia signs should be sensitively designed, of an appropriate size and appropriately located.
4. Advertisements should not be detrimental to the visual amenity of local residents, buildings or the area by reason of scale, detail, character, design or illumination; impair on pedestrian or highway safety including in respect of people with disabilities; or result in, or compound, the perception of clutter on the street scene.
5. The cumulative impact of advertisements on the character and appearance of the surrounding townscape and landscape will be considered as part of any such application.

Response to Appellants Statement

The Kings Head is a Grade II Listed building located within the Billingshurst Conservation Area and the Built-Up Area of Billingshurst. Historic England's Official Register for the property, details that the building is an early 19th Century Public House, of three storeys, faced with rough plaster and a wide eaves modillion cornice. The building has two doorways with joint flat hood on brackets, and a round-headed carriage archway provides access to the rear yard on the south elevation.

Whilst the appellant details within their statement that the sign is a replacement of an existing satellite dish, Google Street View imagery confirms that this dish was removed as far back as April 2021. Notwithstanding this, the previous presence of the satellite dish does not form a material consideration, and the replacement sign must be considered on its own merits.

Whilst the Council acknowledges that no public objections were received, the absence of objections does not indicate that development is acceptable in planning terms. The statutory duty to preserve listed buildings and the character and appearance of conservation areas remains irrespective of the level of public support or objection.

The application sought retrospective consent to retain an illuminated sign on the eastern (front) elevation of the building. The projecting sign measures approximately 0.84m in height, projects 0.67m from the wall and has a depth of 0.16m. It comprises a rectangular LED display measuring approximately 0.60m high by 0.40m wide, with an illuminated panel beneath displaying the word 'Guinness'. The display and panel are enclosed within a black casing and supported by a black metal bracket fixed to the building. No details relating to the levels of illumination were provided, nor what the screen displays.

This building is in a prominent location within the Billingshurst Conservation Area, occupying a central location within the settlement. Whilst there are some illuminated shopfronts within the vicinity, these are integrated into the buildings, with the lighting angled downwards towards the street. There are also projecting hanging signs within the locality, however these are discreet and, where illuminated, are lit by means of trough lighting in a sympathetic manner. This contrasts with the proposed LED display, which would appear visually prominent within the Conservation Area and in contrast to the existing advertisements in the surrounding area, including the traditional hanging sign and advertisements displayed at the King's Head. Whilst the submitted Heritage and Lighting Statement advises that the display will only be illuminated when the external lighting is switched on, it would nevertheless be visually prominent, particularly during the darker winter months where its visual prominence would be greatest, creating a stark contrast

The Council's Conservation Team were consulted as part of the application process, who raised an objection on the grounds that the sign harms the special interests of the listed building. Whilst the council acknowledges the service the pub offers within the community and the need to support pubs at this time, it must also be acknowledged that the sign does not directly advertise the business and is smaller than the principal signs that do. The premises is easily identifiable from the public realm through existing traditional signage and occupies a prominent location on the principal commercial frontage within Billingshurst. The LED display therefore is superfluous to the requirements of the business, particularly given the location of the site within the village centre and on the main thoroughfare. The internally illuminated LED screen and lighting method does not reflect the traditional signage on the building and draws attention away from the architectural features of the building. As such, less than substantial harm, at the lower end of the scale, has resulted following the sign's fitment to the principal elevation and there are no public benefits arising from the installation of this sign which would outweigh the identified heritage harm.

Conclusion

The Council remains of the view that the reasons for refusal are still applicable. In relation to DC/26/0746, the internally illuminated sign, by reason of its illumination and siting, prevents an ability to appreciate the architectural features as intended, and results in harm to the special interest of the Grade II Listed Building. The illuminated sign fails to respect the architectural style and character of the host building, and results in adverse harm to the architectural interest of the designated heritage asset, contrary to Policy 34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and Policy 21 of the emerging Horsham District Local Plan 2023-2041.

In relation to DC/26/0579, the advertisement, by reason of its illumination and siting would appear visually intrusive and would fail to respond positively to the character of the Conservation Area, causing undue harm to the visual amenity of the area. The visual impact of the illuminated sign prevents an ability to appreciate the architectural features as intended, and results in harm to the special interest of the Grade II Listed Building. The illuminated sign fails to respect the architectural style and character of the host building, and results in adverse harm to the architectural interest of the designated heritage asset, and to the visual amenity

of the area, contrary to Policy 14, 32, 33, 34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015) and Policies 19, 20, 21 and 22 of the emerging Horsham District Local Plan 2023-2041.

The Inspector is therefore respectfully requested to dismiss the appeal for the reasons outlined as above.

Yours sincerely,

Sam Nye
Planning Officer

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Emerging Local Plan Policies