



Report from the Head of Development Management to Development Control Committee

Application number: 7/2026/5200

Application type: Advertisement Consent Application

Applicant: Mr Michael Coulthard, The Inn Collection Group

Location: Wordsworth Hotel, Grasmere, Ambleside, LA22 9SW

Grid reference: 333793, 507485

Proposal: Display of 5 signs: 1 externally illuminated-mounted fascia sign (Sign 1), 2 x single-sided externally illuminated low post-mounted signs (Signs 2 and 6), 1 x double-sided externally illuminated post-mounted sign (Sign 4) and 1 x double-sided Metal Arch sign (Sign 7).

Report prepared by: Oliver Borrowdale, Planner

Report agreed by: Kevin Richards, Planning Manager

Recommendation: **APPROVE with conditions**

1 About this report

- 1.1 The case planner has prepared this report, assessment and recommendation taking into account our policies (known as the Development Plan), written representations we have received, and any other material considerations.
- 1.2 Material considerations are things that are relevant to our decision making and which we are able to take into account – for example site

specific factors, or Government planning policy (the National Planning Policy Framework) and Government planning guidance (the National Planning Practice Guidance).

- 1.3 The Development Control Committee will determine the application at its meeting having regard to the provisions of the Development Plan, representations we have received, and all other material considerations, following a verbal and visual summary of the application by the case planner and, where applicable, after hearing any verbal representations made in accordance with our Policy for Public Speaking at Meetings.
- 1.4 Most applications are decided under powers delegated to the Head of Development Management. A small number of significant or more contentious applications are considered by our Development Control Committee as set out in our Scheme of Delegation.

2 Background and proposals

- 2.1 This application is being reported to Committee as the recommendation to approve with conditions is contrary to the objections of Lakes Parish Council.
- 2.2 This application proposes the installation of five signs and associated lighting at Wordsworth House Hotel in Grasmere. The hotel is located in the centre of Grasmere village to the east of Church Stile and is currently undergoing works associated with previously granted permission 7/2020/5149.
- 2.3 The site is within Grasmere Village Conservation Area and whilst the building is not listed, it is identified in the management plan as a Significant Unlisted building which makes a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area.

- 2.4 To the south of the site there are a number of listed buildings including Church Stile Cottage (Grade II), Wordsworth group of graves (Grade II*), St Oswald's Church (Grade I), Church Stile Studio (Grade II) and Barn to the rear of Church Stile Studio (Grade II). The hotel does not form a part of the setting of these listed buildings.
- 2.5 This application originally sought advertisement consent for seven signs but was amended following discussions with officers, reducing the number of proposed signs to five, and reducing the brightness of proposed illumination.

3 Representations

- 3.1 Lakes Parish Council originally objected and recommended refusal of the proposal based on the cumulative visual impact and adverse effect on the area's dark skies and special qualities.
- 3.2 Grasmere Village Society made an objection based on 'disproportionate scale and visual clutter'; 'erosion of conservation area character'; 'impact on dark skies and nighttime amenity'; and 'policy conflict'.
- 3.3 A separate objection was made in relation to the proposed level of illumination and the design of the signs.
- 3.4 Since these representations, the application has been amended to remove two of the signs and to reduce the intensity of illumination.
- 3.5 After reconsultation Lakes Parish Council maintained a recommendation of refusal based on their original response. They are however satisfied that Signs 2 and 7 are acceptable and do not object to their retention.

4 Development plan policies and other relevant guidance

- 4.1 The relevant Development Plan comprises:

- The Lake District National Park Local Plan 2020-2035

4.2 The following Lake District National Park Local Plan policies are relevant to this application:

- Policy 01: National and international significance of the Lake District
- Policy 02: Spatial strategy
- Policy 05: Protecting the spectacular landscape
- Policy 06: Design and development
- Policy 07: Historic environment

- Design Code Supplementary Planning Document

4.3 The National Planning Policy Framework establishes clear requirements for the assessment of advertisement control applications. Paragraph 141 of the NPPF states that: ‘The quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed. [...] Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts’.

4.4 The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 (Part 1, Regulation 3) and The Good Practice Guide – Outdoor advertisements and signs: A guide for Advertisers (June 2007) are relevant in this case.

4.5 The Cumbria Good Lighting Technical Advice Note is relevant with regards to the illuminated signage.

4.6 There is no community plan in this area.

5 Main issues and assessment

Amenity

- 5.1 For the purposes of advertisements, amenity relates to the ‘effect upon visual and aural amenity in the immediate neighbourhood of displaying the advertisement, or using an advertisement site, where passers-by, or people living there, will be aware of the advertisement’, considering the local characteristics of the neighbourhood.
- 5.2 The proposed signage is within an area of special advert control; a National Park, which enjoys the highest level of landscape protection; the English Lake District World Heritage Site, a heritage asset of the highest significance; and the Grasmere Village Conservation Area.
- 5.3 Under section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 the Local Planning Authority has a duty in the exercise of its functions with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, to pay special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.
- 5.4 This application originally proposed the installation of seven signs spread across the front elevation of the Hotel. However, following negotiation with officers the scheme has been amended, reducing the number of signs to five and reducing the level of illumination from the original proposals.
- 5.5 Sign 1: wall-mounted sign would on the furthest gable end the furthest left of the building. It would be around the same size and placement as the existing sign, with the addition of static trough lighting above the sign and pointing down and inwards at the sign. This would have a brightness of 200 candela/m² which is the lowest recommended within the Cumbria Good Lighting Technical Advice Note.

- 5.6 Sign 2: in the same location as an existing sign to the left of the entrance to the hotel, angled inwards towards the entrance. It would measure around the same height as the existing at 0.7m high, but would be longer, at 3.1 metres. It would also be illuminated from above using static LED trough lighting at 200 candela/m².
- 5.7 Sign 4: a new totem/post-mounted sign. It would be a rectangular sign of 1m x 1.2m suspended on a post 2.3m high and would be readable from both directions. It would also be illuminated from above on either side of the sign using LED trough lighting at 200 candela/m².
- 5.8 Sign 6: in the same location as an existing sign to the right of the vehicle entrance to the hotel and would have similar proportions to the existing at 3.1m wide and 0.7m high. It would also be illuminated from above using LED trough lighting at 200 candela/m².
- 5.9 Sign 7:
a black metal archway displaying the name of the hotel also in black metal at the top of the frame. It would be positioned in the location of an existing wooden archway. It would have a small lantern hung on either side and a planter either side. It would be positioned to the right of the main facade and further back from the road than the other advertisements and would act as an archway between the front elevation of the building towards the side/back garden.
- 5.10 The proposed signage would be plain black with vinyl-applied design and wording. The signs are considered to be of an acceptable scale, with most replacing existing signs in terms of location and size. Approval would lead to a reduction in the number of signs and the cluttering of signs, as compared to the previous signs across the building.
- 5.11 The signs would be illuminated by trough lighting positioned above each sign, with light directed downwards and inwards towards the sign boards. The proposed lighting level is the lowest recommended in the Cumbria

Good Lighting Technical Advice Note and would introduce a low level of additional lighting to the front elevation. Given the hotel use, some internal light spill from the building can reasonably be expected, and as the lights would be seen within the context of an established village setting where street lighting and other sources of illumination are already present, it is not a wholly dark-skies location. There are no neighbouring properties immediately opposite or adjacent to the proposed signs. Overall I consider that the proposed lighting is unlikely to cause unacceptable harm to amenity.

5.12 I am satisfied that the proposed advertisements and lighting would not result in an unacceptable impact through visual intrusion, overlooking, overshadowing, overbearing effects, light pollution or other adverse impacts. I am therefore satisfied that as amended, the scale, location, volume and design of the proposals would satisfy the requirements of Local Plan Policies 01, 02, 06 and 07, and the NPPF.

Public safety

5.13 ‘Public safety’ means the considerations which are relevant to the safe use and operation of any form of traffic or transport on land (including the safety of pedestrians), over water or in the air.

5.14 In this location, the main public safety consideration is whether the signs would impact on highway safety. National Planning Policy Guidance points out that “All advertisements are intended to attract attention but proposed advertisements at points where drivers need to take more care are more likely to affect public safety. For example, at junctions, roundabouts, pedestrian crossings, on the approach to a low bridge or level crossing or other places where local conditions present traffic hazards”.

5.15 The proposed signage would be located within the existing Wordsworth Grasmere site and while visible from adjacent highways, would not be

located close to a junction, roundabout or crossing. I am satisfied that the proposals would be acceptable in relation to public safety, specifically in relation to highway safety.

6 Conditions

- 6.1 I am recommending standard conditions in respect of advertisements as well as a standard plans condition. I am also recommending a condition requiring the lighting units to be angled in the interests of highway safety.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 Having regard to the provisions of the development plan, in particular Lake District National Park Local Plan Policies 01, 02, 05, 06, 07, the Design Code SPD and other material considerations (including the provisions of the NPPF), the proposals are considered to be acceptable, subject to the conditions recommended.

Recommendation: APPROVE with conditions

Conditions/Reasons

1 The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in conformity with the following submitted plans and details:

- Drawing 733-(P)-02 Proposed External Signage Rev A - 26.05.26.pdf
received by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt.

2 The trough lighting shall be installed facing towards the signage so that no direct rays of light from the source of illumination shall be visible to drivers of vehicles using the highway, and shall be maintained in that respect

thereafter.

REASON: In the interests of highway safety.

NPPF decision notice requirements

Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure)
(England) Order 2015 Article 35(2) statement.

The Local Planning Authority did not identify problems arising in relation to dealing with the application.

Background papers

Background papers are available for inspection on the planning application file unless otherwise specified on that file as confidential by reasons of financial/personal circumstances in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985.

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Wordsworth Hotel, Grasmere

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Site



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Lake District
National Park Authority

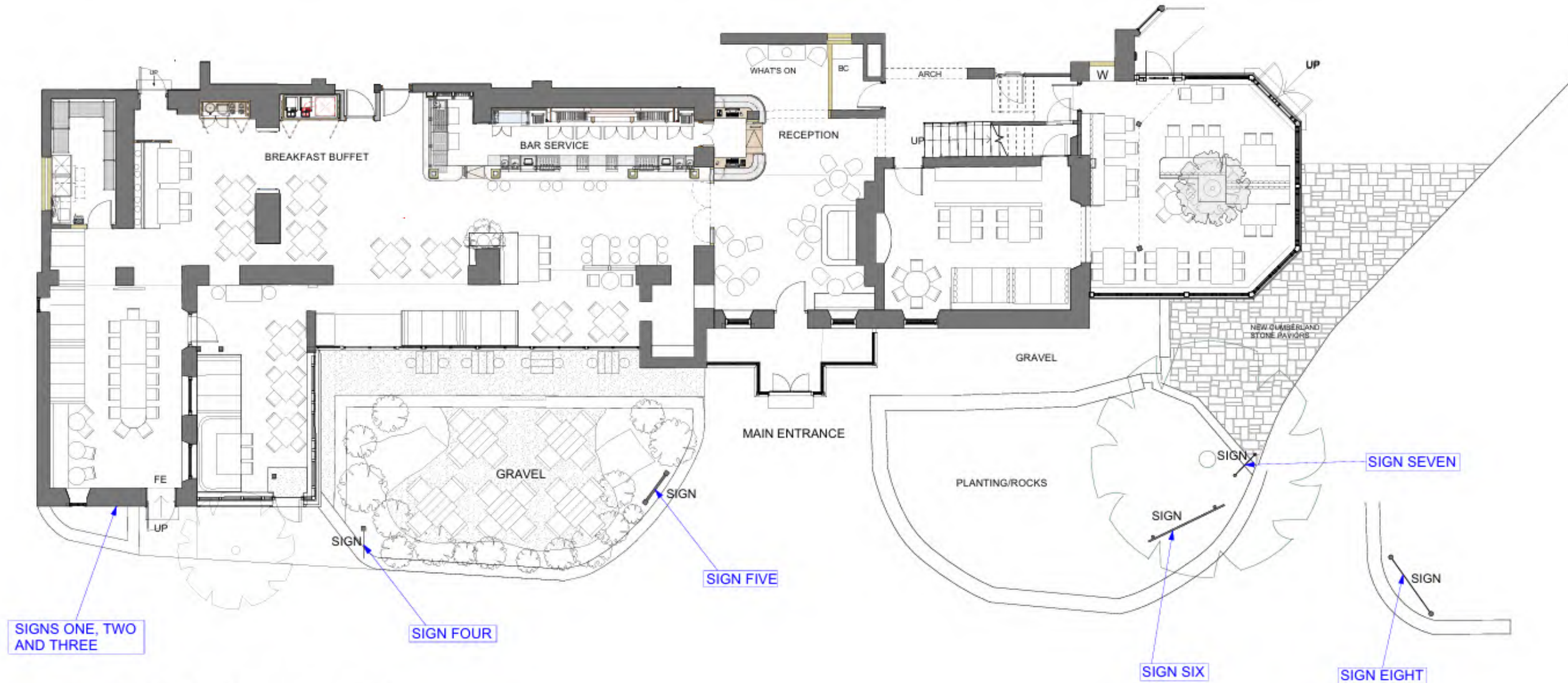
Existing Elevations



Proposed Elevations

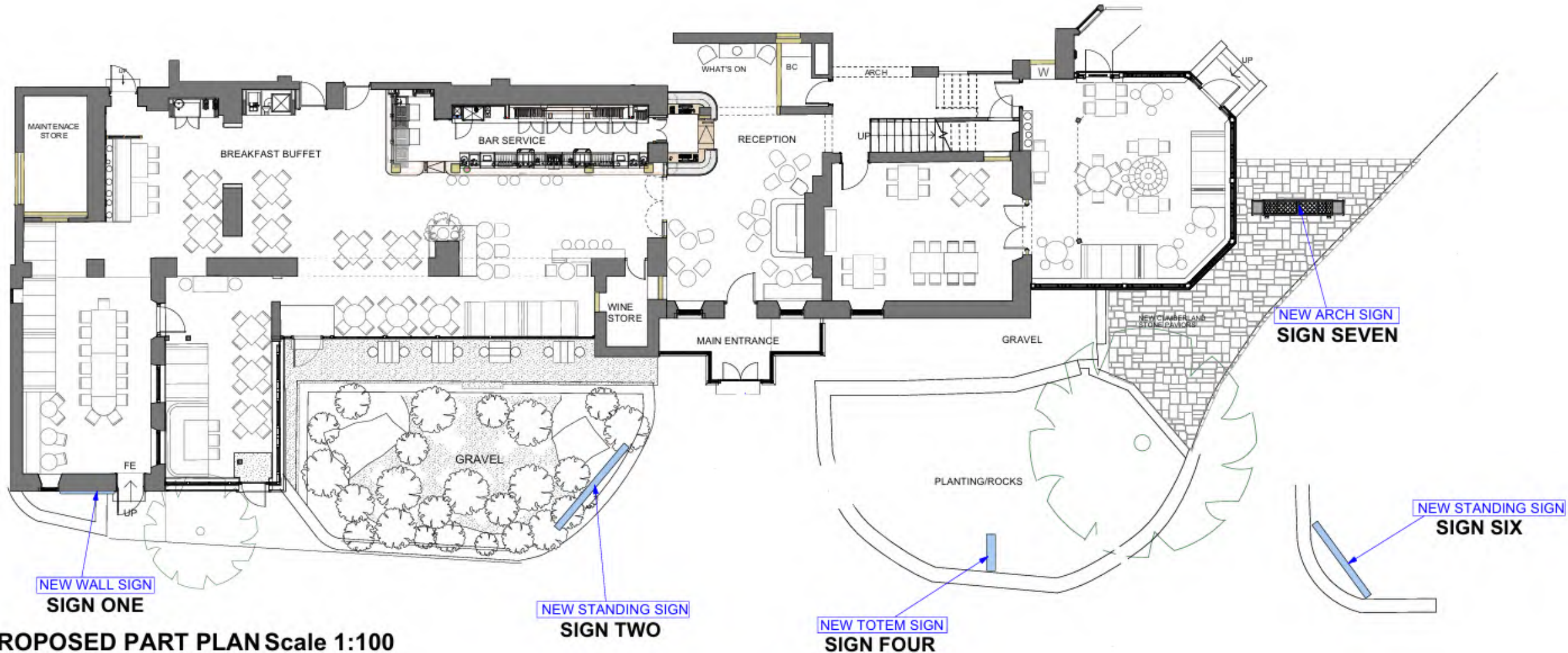


Existing site plan



EXISTING PART PLAN Scale 1:100

Proposed site plan



Proposed Sign 1

Signs to be removed



Sign to be removed

Proposed Sign 2



Proposed Sign 4
(totem sign)



Proposed Sign 7 (archway)

Proposed Sign 6

