

16<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Dear Sir / Madam,

## **Opening of Sandown Seafront Premier Inn and Cookhouse & Pub restaurant**

I'm writing to update you on our plans for opening the new Premier Inn hotel and Cookhouse & Pub restaurant on Sandown Esplanade.

You may recall that my colleague Geoff Cook wrote in August to communicate that the construction of the new hotel and restaurant had finished, and the building will be handing over to Whitbread's New Openings team – the team I lead – for opening.

Geoff's letter also explained that the task of opening new Premier Inn hotels and restaurants is taking longer than normal as we work in a socially distanced and Covid-safe way. The second national lockdown we are all experiencing is another important consideration we are working through.

Our original ambition was to open the Sandown Premier Inn and Cookhouse & Pub by the end of November. To hit the deadline, we would have been actively recruiting and training our new team members – an enjoyable but very intensive time – during this second national lockdown. Commercially, we would also be preparing to open the hotel and restaurant at a quiet time of the year for hotel bookings.

With this in mind, I have taken the difficult decision to hold-off opening the new Sandown hotel and restaurant until the end of January. This extension of time will give us flexibility to prepare the site and recruit the team we need. It will also give us momentum as we head into the busy spring and summer season next year.

I wanted to write at this time in order to give plenty of notice ahead of the Christmas period.

As a business we're extremely grateful for the warm welcome we have received in Sandown since announcing our plans to open here. We are very much looking forward to being part of the community when we open and, as freehold owners of the new hotel and restaurant on the Esplanade, are committed to the town for the long-term.

Our recruitment strategy has not changed – we will continue to recruit locally via the local branch of the Job Centre Plus and the [www.whitbreadcareers.com](http://www.whitbreadcareers.com) website – and I recommend that residents who are interested in working at the Premier Inn and Cookhouse & Pub in Sandown continue to register their interest there.

I hope residents can appreciate the reasons for postponing the opening by a few weeks. Taking time to open carefully and safely in these unprecedented times is the sensible thing to do.

Yours,

Jacqui Allum  
Head of Estate Development

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