



Delegated Report

Full Planning Application

Planning Application No:	20221092
Location:	Londis, 29 Milton Road, Gravesend, Kent
Description:	Change of the shopfront façade, including external security shutters.
Applicant:	Mr J Takhar
Site Visit Date:	Desktop assessment

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application form

Drawing no. D01 Rev. 7 (Existing Block Plan, Proposed Block Plan, Location Plan)

Drawing no. D02 Rev. 7 (Existing Plan and Elevation)

Drawing no. D03 Rev. 7 (Proposed Plan and Elevation)

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20220309	Change of the shopfront façade, including external security shutters.	Refused	16.06.2022
20151080	Change of use of first and second floor levels from residential to storage in connection with the existing A1 retail shop at ground floor level.	Permitted	02.03.2016
20030553	Change of use of the ground floor of no. 30 into class A2 Financial Services; use of the first and second floors above nos. 29 & 30 as two self-contained maisonettes; erection of single storey rear extension to no. 29 to form enlarged retail area, w.c. and staff room and alterations to store at the rear; first floor rear extension to no. 30 to form a kitchen; installation of new shopfronts to nos. 29 & 30; replacement of first floor front windows to nos. 29 & 30 and construction of dormer window in the rear roof slope of no. 30.	Permitted	27.08.2003
20020341	Erection of single storey rear extension to form enlarged retail area and cloakroom/w.c.	Permitted	19.06.2002
20010789	Erection of single storey rear extension to form enlarged retail area and cloakroom/wc.	Refused	02.01.2002
20000317	Partial demolition of part of the ground floor walls and infilling of the open passageway between the two shops to form one enlarged retail unit and installation of new shopfronts and roller shutters incorporating an entrance door to the upper floor flat.	Permitted	15.09.2000

19950801	Alterations to the ground floor front elevation, partial demolition of part of the ground floor load bearing walls and infilling of open passage- way between the two shops to form enlarged retail area.	Refused	05.02.1996
19881162	Installation of a new shopfront.	Permitted	01.03.1989
19860536	Erection of a single storey rear extension to form a porch	Permitted	22.09.1986

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale and Distribution of Development
- CS05 – Gravesend Town Centre Opportunity Area
- CS08 – Retail, Leisure and the Hierarchy of Centres
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 – Design and Development Principles
- CS20 – Heritage and the Historic Environment

Saved Policies in the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (1994)

- TC3 – Development Affecting Conservation Areas
- TC9 – Shopfronts
- AP7 – Milton Road

The Council has a statutory requirement under Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) which states that, with respect to buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF (2021) sets out that policies within adopted local plans should be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every five years and should then be updated as necessary. Such reviews are also a legal requirement as set out in Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) England Regulations 2012.

The Council undertook such a review in September 2019 and found that the adopted Local Plan Core Strategy is in need of a partial review in terms of Policy CS02, due to the increased need for housing since the Local Plan Core Strategy was adopted and the need to ensure that a sufficient land supply exists to meet this need. Whilst saved policies from the Local Plan 1st Review (1994) generally conform with the NPPF (2021), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- 2 – Achieving sustainable development
- 6 – Building a strong, competitive economy
- 7 – Ensuring the vitality of town centres
- 12 – Achieving well-designed places
- 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- SPG 4 – Security measures for shopfronts and commercial premises (2020)
- SPG4 – KCC Parking Standards (2006)
- Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standards (2015)
- Management Plan – Gravesend Town Centre Conservation Areas (2009)
- Milton Place Conservation Area Character Appraisal (2009)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

GBC Conservation

No comments received.

GBC Environmental Protection (Licensing)

Licensing has no concerns with this amendment to the front of the building. I believe it is already in place and our licensing plan reflects the 'proposed' plan.

Neighbouring properties

The application has been advertised by individual neighbour letters to 19 properties, and on site and in the press. The consultation periods expired on 2 and 11 November 2022 respectively.

No letters of representation have been received from neighbouring properties.

Local Ward Councillors were also consulted, and no responses were received.

Officer's Analysis

Background

As shown in the Planning History above, planning application 20220309 for a very similar proposal was refused on the following grounds:

The poor design and materials of this shopfront, together with the loss of the traditional and unified features of the previous original shopfront, are considered to significantly harm the character and appearance of the application building and fail to preserve or enhance the surrounding Milton Place Conservation Area. The proposal therefore fails to comply with the requirements of saved Policies TC3 and TC9 of the Gravesham Local Plan 1994, Policies CS05, CS19 and CS20 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 and paragraphs 126, 120, 190 and 197 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.

The current proposal has been submitted in an attempt to overcome this previous refusal ground.

Proposal

This application seeks permission for the change of the shopfront façade, including external security shutters.

Details of the shutters have not been included with the application, but they are present within the existing façade.

The works have already been carried out and include the installation of a white UPVC shopfront with external shutters. There is a central access door serving the residential use above that has also been replaced in UPVC in line with the shopfront but the red line around the application site does not include this area.

The differences between the previous and current proposal are shown below:

Previous refused application 20220309:



Current proposal:



The only difference is a slightly less deep fascia with some detailing put back into this area. There are no changes proposed to the shopfront itself.

Design, Character and Appearance

Due to the previous application and reason for refusal, the only issue relevant to consider under this application is the design and impact of the proposal on the application building and surrounding street scene.

Section 12 of the NPPF 2021 relates to achieving well-designed places and sets out the Government's requirements in relation to design issues. Paragraph 126 emphasises the importance of achieving high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

Paragraph 130 of the NPPF 2021 seeks to ensure that development will add to the quality of an area, be visually attractive, and sympathetic to local character and history. Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014 reflects these aims and requires that new development is well designed and respects the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

No. 29 Milton Road lies within the Gravesend Town Centre Opportunity Area and the Milton Place Conservation Area. In line with Policy CS05 (Gravesend Town Centre Opportunity Area) of the Core Strategy 2014, it is important that redevelopment is supported where this improves townscape character.

The NPPF 2021 also places great significance on the desirability of sustaining and enhancing heritage assets, and on new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness (paragraphs 197 and 190 respectively). This is echoed in Policy CS20 of the Core Strategy 2014, which states that the significance of the Borough's heritage assets and their setting should always be preserved or enhanced. Saved Policy TC3 of the Local Plan 1994 also states that development is expected to make a positive contribution to the conservation area.

The Council's planning guidance for shopfronts within the town centre or local shopping centres seeks high standards of shopfront design and aims to ensure shopfronts are designed to maintain the attractiveness of the centre. Any proposed alterations should therefore well designed, including the type and colour of materials, and appropriate in terms of the scale and character of the original building, to make a positive contribution to the area.

Specifically in relation to shopfronts, Policy TC9 of the Local Plan 1994 states that the Borough Council will resist developments that would result in existing shopfronts of traditional design and materials being lost, and that would result in the installation of security grills and shutters on the exterior of shopfronts.

It is recognised within the Milton Place Conservation Area Appraisal that there are modern shopfronts on Milton Road. No. 28 to 31 Milton Road, however, are identified as being buildings of townscape merit, as they are recognised as being good examples of relatively unaltered historic buildings that make a positive contribution to the special interest of the conservation area. The Appraisal states that the greatest threat to the character of the buildings on Milton Road is the introduction of unsuitable shopfronts and shop signage.

Over time, changes have been made to this shopfront that have gradually damaged its original noteworthy character, as was demonstrated in the previous application. The works to the shopfront under this application have already been carried out.

Whilst the current application might make an attempt to put back/uncover some detailing at fascia level, the key concern has not been addressed; no changes are proposed to the shopfront itself. There is no justification put forward for the retention of the shopfront and the minor changes now proposed. It remains the case that the traditional and original features of the frontage have been lost. External security shutters are still proposed. The chunky white shopfront frames are incongruous and harmful to the application building. The uniform appearance between the two parts of the shopfront is fragmented. Knowing the concerns raised under the previous application, there has been no attempt to engage and take the opportunity to install something better or improve upon the existing.

As before, the poor design and materials of the retrospective shopfront, with the loss of traditional and

original features, and the lack of any consideration to the Conservation Area designation, significantly detract from the character and appearance of the application building and fail to preserve or enhance the surrounding Conservation Area.

The proposal would therefore fail to comply with the above requirements of saved Policies TC3 and TC9 of the Local Plan 1994, Policies CS05, CS19 and CS20 of the Core Strategy 2014 and paragraphs 126, 130, 190 and 197 of the NPPF 2021.

New signage would be the subject of an advertisement consent application and would be appropriately assessed as and when such an application is submitted, with a particular consideration of the designation of the site. An informative should be included on this basis.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The proposal has made little attempt to address the concerns of the previous application and the previous refusal ground is not considered to have been overcome. This application is recommended for refusal on the same ground:

The poor design and materials of this retrospective shopfront, together with the loss of traditional and unified features of the previous original shopfront, are considered to significantly harm the character and appearance of the application building and fail to preserve or enhance the surrounding Milton Place Conservation Area. The proposal therefore fails to comply with the requirements of saved Policies TC3 and TC9 of the Gravesham Local Plan 1994, Policies CS05, CS19 and CS20 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 and paragraphs 126, 120, 190 and 197 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.

(For reasons for refusal and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Katherine Parkin	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	28 November 2022	Dated:	29th November 2022