



Delegated Report

Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20240758

Location: 3 Echo Square Gravesend Kent DA12 1NP

Description: Retrospective application for the Installation of New Shop Front including new roller shutter.

Applicant: Mr. Bayram Karapinar

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application Form
DRG.01.A – Plans and Elevations

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20230924	Change of use of the ground floor shop unit to restaurant and takeaway use and installation of flue to the rear.	Permitted	07.12.2023
19881227	Installation of a new shopfront.	Permitted	28.04.1989
19840903	Erection of single storey extension at the rear to form enlarged shop and erection of an external staircase at the rear to self contained flat	Permitted	17.12.1984
19830506	Retention of alterations to the ground floor front elevation	Refused	20.07.1983

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS08 – Retail, Leisure and the Hierarchy of Centres
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 – Development & Design Principles

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- TC9 - Shopfronts

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF (2024) 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 (2024), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- Section 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 6 – Building a strong, competitive economy
- Section 7 – Ensuring the vitality of town centres
- Section 12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- Design for Gravesham – Design Code (2024)
- SPG 4 – Security measures for shopfronts and commercial premises Adopted 1996 – amended April 2020.

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

Ward Councillors

No comments received.

GBC Environmental Protection

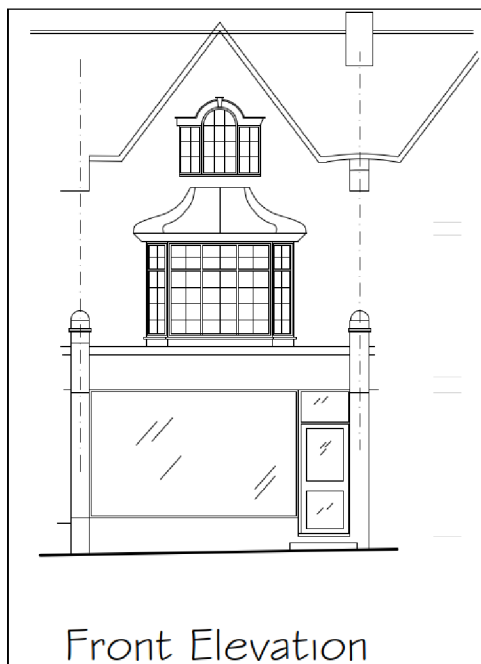
We have no comments with regards to this application.

Neighbouring properties

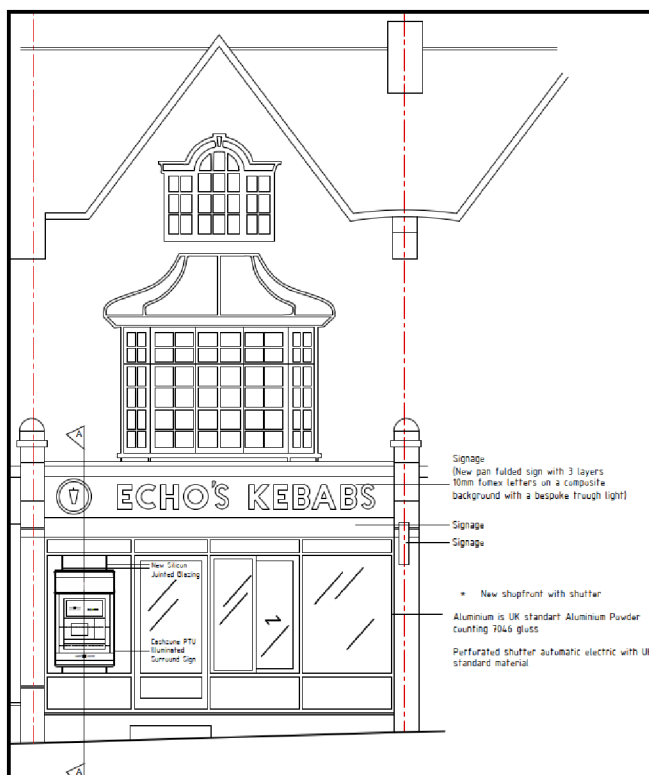
14no. surrounding properties were consulted and 0 comments were received from members of the public.

Officer's Analysis

The application site forms part of a wider Local Centre situated on a busy roundabout and consists of shops and non-residential uses in the wider vicinity. This site in particular obtained planning permission for conversion to restaurant/takeaway in 2023. In that approval the shopfront would appear as follows:



Whilst it is evident that the use has changed following this permission, the shopfront has been altered in a way which does not reflect the consent given. The below images show, the shopfront in situ alongside the proposed front elevation.



Principle of Development

The application site is located within the urban area where Policy CS02 (LPCS) states that development will be prioritised therefore the principle of the development is considered acceptable in principle.

Design, Character and Appearance

Policy CS19 (LPCS) requires new development to be visually attractive, fit for purpose and locally

distinctive. It should conserve and enhance the character of the local built, historic and natural environment and integrate well with the surrounding local area. In particular the design of new development should be derived from a robust analysis of local context and character and make a positive contribution to the street scene and the character of the area.

The Design for Gravesham; Design Code (2024) details how developments must enhance and contribute to local identity.



In this instance, the changes have included; The glazing on the frontage sectioned into smaller panels, removing the large window and door, with an ATM added to the front and roller shutters added. Removal of traditional shopfronts are to be resisted. However, this row of shops have been altered, and are not representative of high quality traditional shopfronts. The changes in this case are generally acceptable, with retention of stall-risers and glazed front. However, the introduction of roller shutters and the ATM, are not considered to be good design for shopfronts.

Specifically in relation to shopfronts, Saved 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.

SPG4 provides guidance on roller shutters as follows:

Roller shutters

Roller shutters require planning permission and are generally considered unacceptable. This category of shutter includes those solid roller shutters with viewing panels, perforations, cutouts or holes. Listed building consent is unlikely to be granted for roller shutters on listed buildings. On buildings within conservation areas, planning permission is unlikely to be given. Planning permission in other situations may only be granted if the following exceptional circumstances apply:

1. the applicant must demonstrate, by documentary evidence, that a persistent security problem exists which could only be resolved by the use of solid roller shutters, as opposed to other security measures, eg grilles;
2. the property should be in an isolated situation, where there is no particular need to maintain a shopfront display;
3. any such scheme should be commensurate with the overall aim of achieving a variety of subtle but secure shopfront security measures

If it is considered that the provision of roller shutters is acceptable in principle. Their installation and design should be carried out as sensitively as possible and the following elements should be incorporated:

1. shutter boxes should be located and designed in accordance with the advice for grille boxes;
2. the guidance channels should be concealed or painted to match the shopfront, or be removed during the day;
3. in all circumstances, the shutter shall be sensitively detailed to give relief to the surface of the shutter, to minimise the visual impact;
4. in most circumstances, the shutter should be fitted so as not to obscure any existing pilasters and should be no lower than the top of the stallriser;
5. shutters should not obscure or damage any other architectural features;
6. shutters should have no viewing panels, but should be perforated and colour finished to match the shopfront;
7. consideration should also be given to incorporating quality sign writing, detailing the name and/or trade of the business. This may require advertisement consent, involving a separate application.

As per the guidance, roller shutters are considered unacceptable unless evidence has been provided which demonstrates a persistent security problem exists which could only be resolved by the use of solid roller shutters and where the property is in an isolated situation. In this instance, neither exception apply and so the use of roller shutters is unacceptable in principle.

For this application, the site does not form a designated heritage asset. Although, the altered roller shutters are considered contrary to SPG 4 as no security need has been evidenced, there is evidence that the roller shutters would have limited impact visually, in this particular location. In this case, a number of shops in the parade have been altered and include roller shutters. As per the delegated report under planning ref 20090386 at 5 Echo Square, *'a clear precedent for roller shutters has been set within this local centre'*. There are no other ATM's in this parade, and its introduction in the face of the takeaway appears unusual. However, ATM's are often included in shopfronts, although usually on the front of grocery retailers, not takeaway outlets, and in this instance where there is little by way of traditional frontage in this row, it would be considered acceptable.

On balance, the proposed development would comply with; saved Policy TC9 of the Gravesham Local Plan 1994, Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy 2014 and paragraph 135 the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).

Amenity of Future Occupiers

The NPPF (2024) states that planning decisions should aim to secure a high standard of amenity for all existing and future users. The impact on amenity is also considered with regard to the criteria with Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy, which states that new development should be located, designed and constructed to safeguard the amenity, including privacy, daylight and sunlight, of its occupants, and those of neighbouring properties and land. The impact on neighbours will be assessed in the next section of the report.

The building is assumed to be in use as a takeaway/restaurant use with a flat above given this is the last known use and no change of use of the premises has been submitted. The first floor is accessed from the rear of the building and this has not been altered by the development.

In respect of the amenity of occupiers the proposal on balance is therefore considered compliant with Policy CS19 (LPCS).

Neighbouring Amenity

As outlined above, it is important that any development safeguards the amenity of neighbouring properties and land. Following a period of consultation with neighbouring properties, no objection to the proposal was

received.

Whilst the site forms a row of retail units, there are a number of flats above the shops. The alterations do not result in any overbearing bulk or overshadowing to neighbouring properties. Nor would it directly overlook private amenity spaces. The Environmental Protection Team have made no comment, and so there is assumed to be no concerns regarding noise from the roller shutters.

The proposal is therefore considered to safeguard the amenity of neighbouring properties in compliance with policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014.

Conclusion

The retrospective changes to the shopfront include roller shutters, which are resisted as per SPG 4. However, in this case there is a clear precedent for roller shutters in this row of shops and so it would be unreasonable to resist this, where the scheme would not fail any other policy requirement.

The proposed development complies with all other relevant national and local planning policies. The recommendation is therefore to approve the scheme.

Recommendation

The recommendation is to approve the scheme.

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Lisa Fisher	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	12th December 2024	Dated:	16th December 2024