

Heritage Statement

Application Site

24 Windmill Street, Gravesend, Kent DA12 1AS

Application Reference : 20260914

1. Description of the Heritage Asset and its Significance

The application property is located at 24 Windmill Street, Gravesend, within the designated Gravesend Conservation Area. The building forms part of an established commercial streetscape characterised by traditional shopfronts, a varied mix of retail premises, and historic buildings that collectively contribute to the area's architectural and historic significance.

The significance of the site lies primarily in its contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area through its position within the street frontage and its relationship with neighbouring commercial properties. The building makes a positive contribution to the vitality and visual continuity of Windmill Street.

2. Contribution of the Setting to Significance

The setting of the property is defined by the surrounding historic town centre environment, including adjoining retail premises, pedestrian activity, and the continuous commercial frontage along Windmill Street.

The property's contribution to the Conservation Area is principally derived from its visibility within the street scene and its role as part of the wider historic commercial character of Gravesend town centre.

3. Assessment of the Impact of the Proposed Works

The application relates solely to alterations to the existing shopfront. No extensions, structural alterations, demolition works, or changes to the building's use are proposed.

The proposed works comprise:

- Replacement/alteration of the existing shopfront.
- Installation of updated glazing and framing.
- New fascia signage (if applicable).
- Refurbishment of the ground floor commercial frontage.

The proposals will not affect the scale, form, height, massing, or historic fabric of the building beyond the shopfront area.

As the works are limited to the commercial frontage and do not involve substantial alteration of the host building, the impact on the significance of the Conservation Area is expected to be neutral or positive.

4. Measures Taken to Preserve and Enhance Significance

The proposed shopfront has been designed to create a well-maintained and visually attractive frontage that complements the character of the surrounding streetscape.

The design:

- Retains the established commercial use of the premises.
- Respects the proportions of the existing shopfront opening.
- Uses high-quality materials and finishes appropriate to a town-centre retail environment.
- Improves the appearance of the premises compared with the existing frontage.
- Avoids alterations to the upper floors or wider building structure.

The proposal therefore preserves the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and contributes positively to the continued vitality of Windmill Street.

5. Balance with Other Legislative Requirements

The proposed alterations have also been designed having regard to current building standards and accessibility requirements.

Where appropriate, the design seeks to improve accessibility for customers, including clear visibility through the shopfront and safe access to the premises. These requirements have been balanced with the need to respect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

The works are limited in scope and have been carefully designed so that any modern requirements for safety, accessibility, and commercial operation are accommodated without causing harm to the heritage significance of the building or its setting.

6. Conclusion

The proposed shopfront alterations at 24 Windmill Street are modest in scale and confined to the ground-floor commercial frontage. The works do not adversely affect the significance of the building or the character and appearance of the Gravesend Conservation Area.

The proposal is considered to preserve, and potentially enhance, the visual quality of the street scene through the introduction of an upgraded and well-maintained

shopfront design. Accordingly, the proposal complies with national and local planning policies relating to heritage conservation.