



# Delegated Report

## Full Planning Application

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|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Planning Application No:</b> | 20240658                                                                  |
| <b>Location:</b>                | 29 Milton Road Gravesend Kent DA12 2RF                                    |
| <b>Description:</b>             | Replacement shopfronts and replacement entrance door to flats above shop. |
| <b>Applicant:</b>               | Jappy Takhar                                                              |
| <b>Site Visit Date:</b>         | Desktop assessment (see planning history)                                 |

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### Submitted Documents/Plans

Application form  
Cover letter dated 16 July 2024  
OS Plan  
Heritage Statement  
Drawing no. MRG/0724/01 (Survey as existing)  
Drawing no. MRG/0724/02 (Survey as proposed)

### Relevant Planning History

| Reference | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Decision                    | Decision Date            |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 20221092  | Change of the shopfront façade, including external security shutters.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Refused<br>Appeal dismissed | 29.11.2022<br>10.07.2023 |
| 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
- CS11 – Transport
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- 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
- T1 – Impact of Development on the Highway Network
- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- 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 (2023) 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 (2023), the Council will also seek to replace these.

### National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

- 2 – Achieving sustainable development
- 6 – Building a strong, competitive economy
- 7 – Ensuring the vitality of town centres
- 9 – Promoting sustainable transport

- 12 – Achieving well-designed and beautiful places
- 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- 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*

Retention of historic detailing is paramount and any such detailing needs to be revealed/reinstated. The shopfronts need to be unified traditional timber shop fronts, but clearly respecting their individual joinery detailing – diversity in a unified monotony.

As per our guidance on shop front design, external roller shutters cannot be supported.

#### Neighbouring properties

The application has been advertised by individual neighbour letters to 19 properties, and on site and in the press. The overall consultation period expired on 20 September 2024.

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 20221092 was refused on the following grounds:

*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.*

This application was also dismissed at appeal. The current proposal has been submitted in an attempt to overcome the concerns raised by the Inspector.

#### Proposal

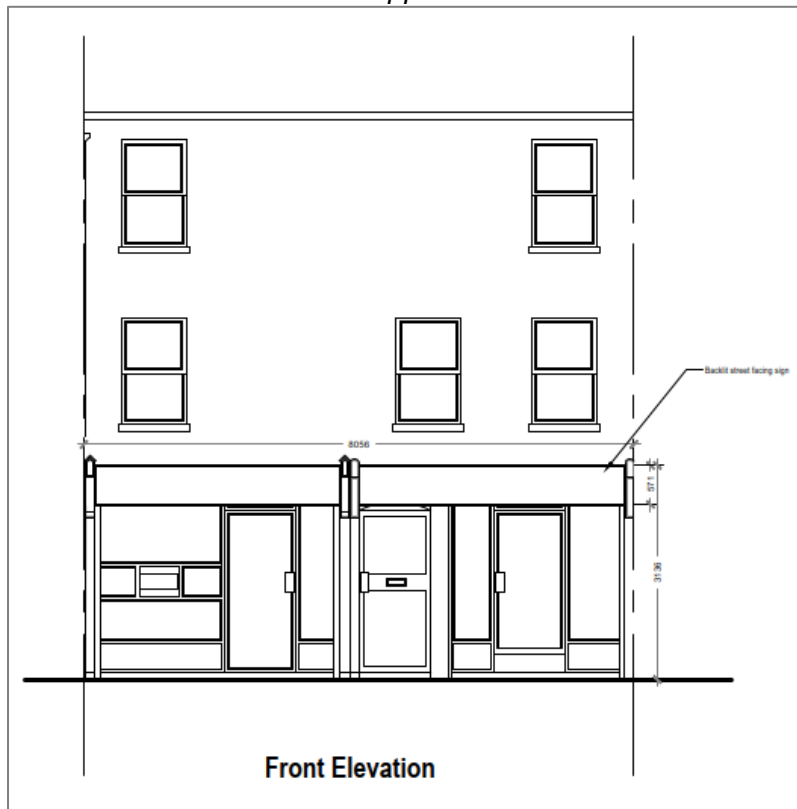
This application seeks permission for the replacement of the shopfronts and a replacement entrance door to the flats above the shop units.

Details of security shutters are not included with the application.

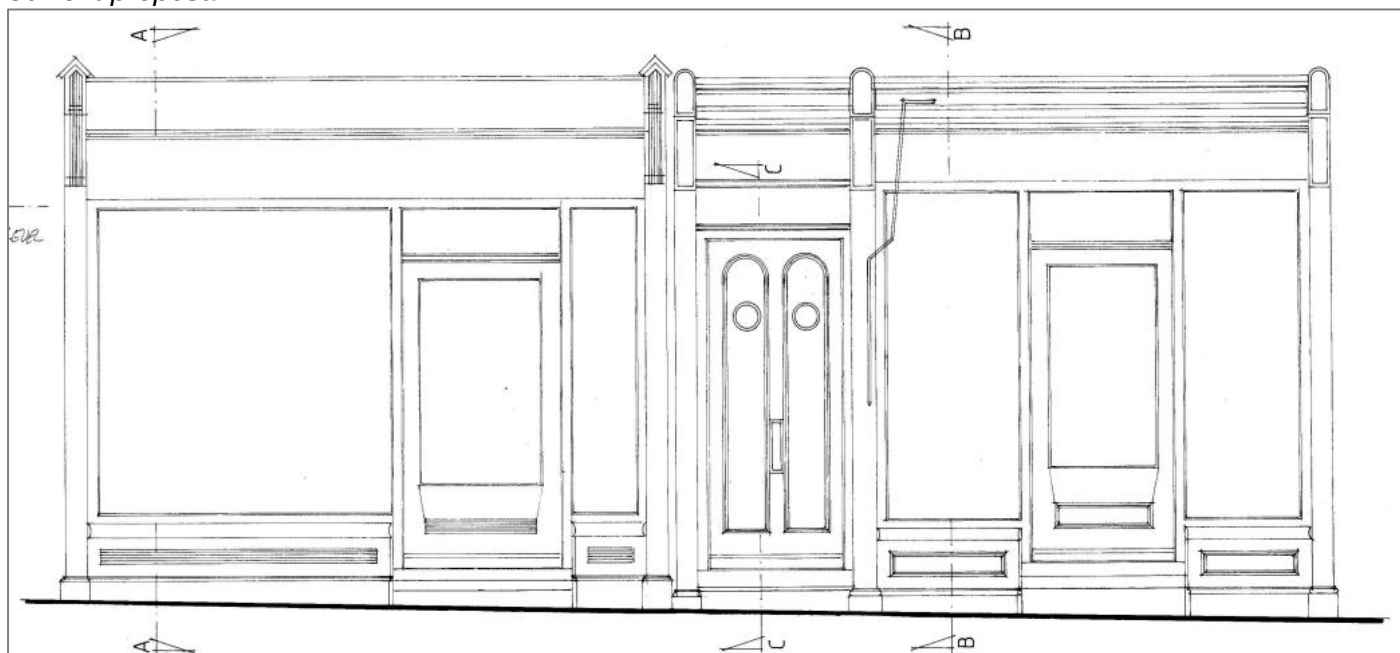
This application is a result of unauthorised works to the shopfronts having already been carried out, including the installation of a white UPVC shopfront with external shutters. There is a central access door serving the residential use above that has also been replaced in UPVC in line with the shopfront.

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

*Previous refused/dismissed application 20221092:*



*Current proposal:*



The proposals are to remove the existing unauthorised aluminium shopfronts, roller shutters and the central door leading to the flats.

Historic shopfront joinery is to be retained, reinstated and restored. The new joinery will occupy the depth and height of the aluminium shopfronts. The detailing of the shopfronts will vary slightly to match with the existing historic joinery, with reeded panels in the stallriser and door panel on one side of the shopfront and panel mouldings on the other. The proposed two panel door giving access to the flats is also detailed with panel mouldings and fitted with two brass framed 'portholes' for vision and light to the lobby. A pilaster will also be introduced between the door to the flats and the right-hand shopfront.

Both shopfronts will have a skirting detail to conceal the masonry base which is currently visible. It is also proposed to provide a single elliptical step outside each entrance door to assist with meeting Building Regulations for a publicly accessible stair/step riser.

Leadwork will be renewed. The timber fascias will offer scope for painted signage.

### 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.

In order to be considered acceptable, the revised shopfront proposals must address the Inspector's main comments as set out in the previous appeal decision:

- 1. The development has resulted in the loss of original and attractive features which made a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.*
- 2. The new UPVC doors, framing and stall-risers have a modern appearance and lack the detailing and appearance of the originals.*
- 3. The loss of the higher-level windows and the introduction of external security shutters compounds the modern and unsympathetic appearance.*
- 4. There is no information...that would indicate that the proposal is the only way of achieving [the increased security that would be offered by the development.]*

Section 12 of the NPPF 2023 relates to achieving well-designed places and sets out the Government's requirements in relation to design issues. Paragraph 131 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 135 of the NPPF 2023 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 2023 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 196). 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 has been demonstrated in the previous applications and appeal.

The current application sets out to reinstate the historic shopfront detailing, restoring the character of each shopfront with matching mouldings, and using good quality materials (timber). The shopfronts can be unified as a single unit through the use of colour and complementary signage. This will significantly improve the appearance of the building itself, which will in turn enhance the character of the Milton Place Conservation Area.

The Conservation Officer is happy with the proposals, subject to conditions on joinery detail drawings and colour to be agreed.

The much improved design and materials of the proposed shopfronts, with the reinstatement of traditional and original features, and the clear appreciation of the Conservation Area designation, will significantly improve the character and appearance of the application building and preserve and enhance the surrounding Conservation Area, thereby complying 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 131, 135, and 196 of the NPPF 2023. The previous concerns raised in the refused applications and by the Inspector at appeal are considered to have been addressed and overcome.

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 good shopfront design and materials proposed under this application, with the reinstatement of traditional and unified features of the original shopfronts, are considered to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the application building and the surrounding Milton Place Conservation Area. The proposal therefore complies 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 131, 135 and 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision.)

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|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| <b>Case Officer:</b> | Mrs Katherine Parkin | <b>Team Leader:</b> | Richard Hart |
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|                |                  |                |                                    |
|----------------|------------------|----------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>Signed:</b> | <i>K. Parkin</i> | <b>Signed:</b> | <i>R Hart</i>                      |
| <b>Dated:</b>  | 3 October 2024   | <b>Dated:</b>  | <b>4<sup>th</sup> October 2024</b> |