

Delegated Report

Planning Application

Planning Application No: 20231220

Location: 18 Windmill Street, Gravesend, DA12 1AS

Description: Alteration to the shop front, proposed fascia board signage and internal alteration.

Applicant: Ms Reena Khokhar

Site Visit Date: 11 December 2023

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application form
Covering letter
Drawing no. 002 rev B (proposed plans)
Drawing no. 003 rev A (proposed details and sections)
Drawing no. 001 rev A (existing plans and site location plan)

Relevant Planning History

None

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014):

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale & Distribution of Development
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 - Development & Design Principles
- CS20 – Heritage and the Historic Environment

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- P3 – Vehicle Parking Standards
- TC3 – Development Affecting Conservation Areas
- TC9 - Shopfronts

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)

- Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development
- Section 4 – Decision-making
- Section 5 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
- Section 8 – Promoting healthy and safe communities
- Section 11 – Making effective use of land
- Section 12 – Achieving well-designed and beautiful places
- Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- Upper Windmill Street Conservation Area Appraisal
- Security Measures for Shopfronts and Commercial Premises SPG4

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Consultees

Neighbouring properties

The application has been advertised by site notice, press notice and individual letters to three neighbouring properties. One letter of objection has been received. Main concerns:

- This is the last shop front of age along this parade of shops and should be retained, repaired and improved, not removed for poorly designed aluminium frames.
- The proposed external roller shutter is a poor solution that will cause additional harm to the conservation area.
- The property at no.17 has replaced the shop front without planning consent so shouldn't be viewed as an example to fit in with as the applicant states.
- Additional advice about the wooden window at first floor level should be provided to the applicant before that is also replaced.

Officer's Analysis

Proposal

This application seeks planning permission for the alteration to the shop front and internal alteration (it does not include signage). Originally the proposal was to replace the shopfront with an aluminium framework due to the condition of the current shopfront. External roller grilles were also proposed due to concerns regarding security. The applicant was advised that neither the aluminium shopfront nor roller grilles would be suitable within this location as it is a Conservation Area. The applicant altered the drawings to show a timber shopfront and internal grilles as shown below:

Proposed Elevation

1:50



Design, Character and Appearance

As stated above, the application site is located within the Windmill Street Conservation Area. The row of shops 15-20 Windmill Street are some of the earliest shops in the row. They would have been houses originally with gardens to the front. The two storey buildings form a terrace of single-bay structures; the rhythm of the bays has been lost at ground floor level with the introduction of modern shopfronts, some of which span across more than one bay, but is retained at first floor level, where some original multi-paned sash windows survive. Negative features of the Conservation Area include modern shopfronts and signage which is not of a design that reflects or enhances the historic building on which it is inserted.

Policy CS19 of the Gravesham Core Strategy 2014 states that new development will be visually attractive, fit for purpose and locally distinctive. It will conserve and enhance the character of the local built, historic and natural environment, integrate well with the surrounding local area and meet anti-crime standards.

Policy CS20 states that the Council will accord a high priority towards the preservation, protection and enhancement of its heritage and historic environment as a non-renewable resource, central to the regeneration of the area and the reinforcement of sense of place. Proposals and initiatives will be supported which preserve and, where appropriate, enhance the significance of the Borough's heritage assets, their setting where it contributes to the significance of the asset and their interpretation and enjoyment, especially where these contribute to the distinct identity of the Borough.

In terms of appearance the existing shopfront has been painted and appears in keeping with the surrounding area. Its replacement is regretful however the proposed timber shopfront is considered in keeping with the surrounding area and Conservation Area and no objection is raised.

Policy TC9 of the Gravesham Local Plan 1994 states:

The Borough Council will resist developments which would result in:-

- (i) Existing Shopfronts of traditional design and materials being lost.
- (ii) The installation of security grills and shutters on the exterior of Shopfronts.

Internal grilles do not require planning permission and are the next most favourable solution. The submitted plans no longer show external grilles which are unacceptable in policy terms. The proposal for internal grilles is the preferred option as these are less visible and do not require planning permission. SPG4 (Security measures for shopfronts and commercial premises) also supports internal grilles as the most favourable solution.

The proposed replacement shopfront and internal grilles are considered to comply with Policies CS19 and CS20 of the Gravesham Core Strategy 2014, policies TC3 and TC9 of the Gravesham Local Plan 1994 and Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2023.

Amenity

The proposed shopfront and internal grilles will have no detrimental impact on the amenities of neighbouring properties and therefore accord with policy CS19 of the Gravesham Core Strategy 2014 in this regard.

Parking and Highways

The proposed changes to the shop front will have no impact on parking or highway safety.

Conclusion

The proposed shopfront and internal grilles will have no detrimental impact on the surrounding Conservation Area, amenity, parking or highway safety and therefore accord with the abovementioned Policies.

Recommendation:

Permit

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

Case Officer:	Mrs Alison Webster	Team Leader:	Miss Faye Hobbs
Signed:		Signed:	
Dated:	30 April 2024	Dated:	01 May 2024